
TOUCHING LIVES THROUGH TEACHING: ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENT-TEACHERS' LEARNING ENGAGEMENT AT LEYTE NORMAL UNIVERSITY

GERARDO P. NICOL

ABSTRACT

It is an initiative for both teacher and students to create a conducive learning environment from time-to-time depending on the students learning styles and required skills which are needed for a positive and productive output. The study is conducted to determine the English major student-teachers' learning engagement at Leyte Normal University, S.Y. 2018-2019 using the seven components of learning engagement principles of Chickering & Gamson (1987) cited in Cornelius (2016). The study noted that there were variations of the mean scores nonetheless shown as 'always' in the engagement of learning among the student-teachers. It revealed that the number of the household members showed a significant difference in the student-teachers' learning engagement. It also revealed that there is a significant correlation of student-teachers' learning engagement in the components of student-faculty contact, cooperating among students, active learning, prompt feedback, emphasizing time-on-task, communicating high expectations, and diverse talents and ways of learning. Thus, the components of learning engagement proved that they are associated with each other. Furthermore, the institution (LNU) emphasizes the target of quality education as evident in their 100% board examination for teachers in the last seven years which shows manifestation on how the students were trained and taught to become competitive and be passionate in the teaching profession in their field of specialization. Finally, this study provides evidence that these components of learning engagement are strongly related with one another so they should be retained and be emphasized in pursuit of quality and excellent education.

KEYWORDS: *component, engagement, specialization, student-teachers*

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, learning experiences were engaged with first-hand exposures from the classroom and beyond. It is an initiative for both teacher and students to create a conducive learning environment from time-to-time depending on the students' learning styles and required skills needed to learn for a positive and productive output. Parsons & Taylor (2011) expressed that over the last twenty years, the students have changed as an influence of technology evolution which it is essential to understand the new generation of students on how to engage them in the process of learning for them to become competitive in the chosen field of specialization granted by a higher education institution.

According to Cornelius (2016), the indicator of competitive teaching in higher education could take into account on how to create a positive learning experience for the students. Thus, a teacher has a vital role in building an environment of learning that facilitates student learning engagement which he predominantly becomes a designer and facilitator of learning experiences and opportunities.

In learning, experiences are significant among students which primarily student engagement involves on several components such as active learning, experiences both doing and observing, reflection, and even role-playing, simulation, a dramatization that make rich learning experiences significant among students (Raghallaigh & Cunniffe, 2013). The successful students engaging classrooms often combine with relevant, real, intentionally interdisciplinary, moving to learn from the school to the community, technology-rich learning environments both in mastery and demonstration skills on a culture of learning that focuses on engagement first followed by achievement (Cornelius, 2016).

Moxham et al. (2007) mentioned that a descriptor used to express on the significance of first understanding and to focus a student's own experience, which has been defined by cultural and sub-cultural variety before their learning practices can inform, engage and eventually transformative in the students' classroom participation.

According to O'Connor (2013), instructors need to consider class participation techniques that engage all learners in the classroom are not just a few reliable students who raise their hands. Designing course experiences and

conducting class meetings in a manner that aims to ensure active participation and cognitive engagement of students is essential. Axelson & Flick (2011) said that recent interest in student engagement had encouraged college instructors on their classroom practices towards students' more significant participation in the process of learning.

On the other hand, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) recommended up-to-date learning engagement to the students as part of ASEAN Integration Framework (AIF) in addressing the gap of the students to become more globally competitive in meeting the challenge of the latter. Moreover, the commission has crafted policies and standards to keep track with the demands of globalization through effective teaching and transfer of learning to the target students.

The researcher believes that students have multiple active pathways to translate their constructive motivational states into better-developed skills; achieved educational objectives; and to academically progress which engaging teachers to students with effort, enthusiastically, strategically, and proactively resulted positively (Reeve & Woogul, 2014).

The transmission of knowledge and information of the instructor to the students depends on the activities and development of the students' understanding. Thus, teachers engage students through establishing practical and useful communication relationships with their students (Weber et al., 2011).

However, the researcher needs to evaluate the components of learning engagement principles adopted from Chickering & Gamson (1987) cited in Cornelius (2016). It is the perspective of student-teachers in the Languages and Literature Unit of Leyte Normal University which significantly and effectively promote learning as well as provide valuable learning experiences among students in undergraduate education namely; student-faculty contact; cooperation among students; active learning; prompt feedback; emphasizing time-on-task; communicating high expectations; and diverse talents and ways of learning.

These components of learning engagement underlined in the goals and objectives of the unit which this study is conducted on the elements that manifest in the process of learning towards the students which the student-teachers themselves could apply in their practice teaching and if these components may vary to the variables above under study.

The researcher presents his output as a guide on the enhancement of the weak component(s) which unintentionally are neglected and to include them in the learning activities and process of learning for them to become competitive globally. This study is also beneficial to the student-teachers on what learning engagements are more appropriate to the level of their students in the field.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the 'theory of engagement' by Kearsley and Shneiderman (1998) as cited in Mehdinezhad (2011). This theory proposes to describe times where students are meaningfully engaged in learning activities through interaction with others and essential tasks. This engagement theory comprises three components, collaboration, project orientation, and an authentic focus.

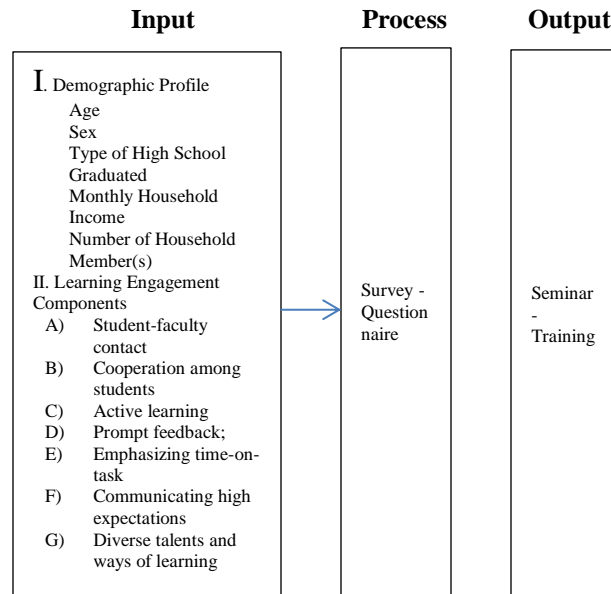
The theory focuses on learning high-quality which achieves positive outcomes by challenging sociocultural contexts that requires active student participation and involvement in authentic learning activities. This theory influences active student engagement in dynamic and complex academic learning environments which necessitates teamwork, collaborative learning, shared experiences and co-creation of meaning (Machumu et al., 2018).

However, in this study, the researcher adopted the seven components of learning engagement principles presented by Chickering & Gamson (1987) cited in Cornelius (2016) such as student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, emphasizing time-on-task, communicating high expectations, and diverse talents and ways of learning.

In other words, learning engagement is proactive and dynamic. It focuses on the students to be more attentive as well as in attendance in a learning process. It also targets the students' tasks being assigned to them. The students not only do the duties assigned but also do the jobs with enthusiasm and persistence (Schlechty, 2002 as cited in Saeed & Zyngier, 2012).

According to Ford (2009), the input of activeness and active learning is central to the environments, and applying knowledge on the student's understanding in real-world situations, reflection, and experience what they have learned firsthand. It also engaged with their peers and were more inclined to make progress in their college learning and development. It argued that not only should teachers recognize the opportunity to maximize learning with their other students but also through collaborative learning.

The components of learning engagement principles such as student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, emphasizing time-on-task, communicating high expectations, and diverse talents and ways of learning presume to vary or differ and relate to each other. The variables aforementioned are age, sex, type of high school graduated, monthly household income, and a number of the household member may differ to the components mentioned. A schematic diagram follows:



Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the student-teachers' learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University if this learning engagement has something to do with selected variables aforementioned and teaching profession may inspire, motivate, and uplift the lives of the people, the calendar year 2018-2019.

This study aimed to answer the following specific questions:

1. What demographic profile of the respondents reveal regarding:
 - A. Age
 - B. Sex
 - C. Type of High School Graduated
 - D. Monthly Household Income
 - E. Number of Household Members
2. What is the level of student-teachers' learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University when taken as a grouped and classified according to age, sex, type of high school graduated, monthly household income, and number of the household members?
3. Is there a significant difference of student-teachers' learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University when classified according to age, sex, type of high school graduated, monthly household income, and number of the household members?
4. Is there a significant correlation between and among student-teacher's learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University in the components?

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- A. Student-faculty contact
 - B. Cooperation among students
 - C. Active learning
 - D. Prompt feedback
 - E. Emphasizing time-on-task
 - F. Communicating high expectations
 - G. Diverse talents and ways of learning

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference of student-teacher's learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University when classified according to age, sex, type of high school graduated, monthly household income, and number of household members.
2. There is no significant correlation between and among student-teacher's learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University in the components of (A) Student-faculty contact; (B) Cooperation among students; (C) Active learning; (D) Prompt feedback; (E) Emphasizing time-on-task; (F) Communicating high expectations; and (G) Diverse talents and ways of learning.

METHODOLOGY

In this quantitative study, a descriptive-correlational research design was appropriate to determine the student-teacher's learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University. The respondents were fourth-year Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English presently in their internship-teaching program in the Department of Education (DepEd) in Tacloban City division.

This research collected data using survey-questionnaire adopted from the components of learning engagement principles of Chickering & Gamson (1987) cited by Cornelius (2016) to gather data for statistical interpretation using purposive sampling considering the limited number of the student-teachers in the English Department. However, there were essays on their views on learning engagement to support the numerical value of the study as signaled by "extracts" in the result discussions. The limitation of this study was the number of the respondents, but the researcher asked the expert statistician on what appropriate statistical tools to use in every objective to achieve reliable results.

Furthermore, the researcher proceeded to code, summarize, and tabulate for a presentation of data using this scale.

Scale	Interpretation
4.20 – 5.00	Always
3.40 – 4.19	Often
2.60 – 3.39	Sometimes
1.80 – 2.59	Seldom
1.00 – 1.79	Never

The ethical consideration of this study was to assure the respondents on the confidentiality of the responses in this study by asking their consent to participate in this research without any potential risks in their personal and performance in the college nor influencing/dictating in regards with their views and opinions. Moreover, the researcher emphasized that the respondents could outright refuse not to participate in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In objective number 1 on the demographic profile of the respondents shown in Table 1 concerning the following variables: (a) as to age, 19 years old respondents have manifested as student-teachers under the internships program of the College of Education major in English at Leyte Normal University;

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents with the Selected Variables

Variables	F	%
Age		
19	13	61.9
others	8	38.1
Total	21	100.0
Sex		
Male	1	4.8
Female	20	95.2
Total	21	100.0
Type of High School Graduated		
Public	20	95.2
Private	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0
Monthly Household Income		
Below Average Income	19	90.5
Above Average Income	2	9.5
Total	21	100.0
Number of Household Members		
4 members	6	28.6
5 members	5	23.8
6 members	6	28.6
7 members	3	14.3
8 members	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

(b) as to sex, females have manipulated as students-teachers; (c) as to Type of High School Graduated, public high school manifested as majority in the study; (d) as to Monthly Household Income, a below average monthly income in the family also revealed in this study; and (e) as to Number of Household Members, family of 4 or 6 members showed in the study.

This study could imply that the majority of the student-teachers were 19 years old, female, graduated from public high school, below average family income and family members composed of 4 or 6 members. Cornelius (2016) mentioned that socio-economic status, self-efficacy views, and dropout are strongly associated with classroom learning engagement. In one of the respondents said,

Extract 1

"The realization that no children are the same matters since the diversity of the students will be the basis of the pace of your teaching process."

In the same manner, it also focuses on student motivational factors to determine, gender differences in motivational factors and relates motivational factors with students' engagement learning strategies which built on theoretical foundations of engagement learning and constructivist-based blended learning (Machumu et al., 2018). Table 1 shows the data.

Table 2. Level of Student-Teachers Learning Engagement with the Selected Variables

Variables	f	Mean	SD	Interpretation
As a Whole	21	4.33	0.377	Always
Age				
19	13	4.25	0.433	
others	8	4.40	0.323	
Total	21	4.38	0.350	Always
Sex				
Male	1	4.53	-	
Female	20	4.31	0.391	
Total	21	4.32	0.384	Always

Type of High School Graduated				
Public	20	4.33	0.388	
Private	1	4.01	-	
Total	21	4.32	0.384	Always
Monthly Household Income				
Below Average Income	19	4.33	0.399	
Above Average Income	2	4.18	0.205	
Total	21	4.32	0.384	Always
Number of Household Members				
4 members	6	4.33	0.412	
5 members	5	4.44	0.259	
6 members	6	3.94	0.117	
7 members	3	4.80	0.208	
8 members	1	4.53	-	
Total	21	4.32	0.384	Always

Objective 2 focused on the level of student-teacher's learning engagement of English majors at Leyte Normal University with the selected variables age, sex, type of high school graduated, monthly household income and the number of the household members and are interpreted as 'always.' The researcher noted that there were variations of the mean scores nonetheless revealed as always in the engagement of learning among the Practice Teachers who are majors in English.

The study could imply that learning engagement manifested among the Practice Teachers were a clear indicator of maximizing the principles of the components. These principles are student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, emphasizing time-on-task, communicating high expectations, and diverse talents and ways of education regardless of age, sexual orientation, type of high school graduated, family income and the number of family members. In one of the respondents said,

Extract 2

"Among those learnings include the conditioning of the minds of the students before even proceeding to the lesson proper or before introducing concepts to the students. Also, I have learned that there is various intelligence that must be taken in consideration so that as a teacher you'll know what kind of material or activity you'll be having since every student is unique and is smart on its own."

According to Hardy & Bryson (2009), learning engagement of students has a dynamic and dependency on the factors both within and outside the classroom as well as both academic and social community. It is said that students' previous experiences of education, expectation, and aspirations have an influence on their views in various measures of engagement. Table 2 shows the data.

Objective 3 focused on the significant difference of the learning engagement of English major student-teachers at Leyte Normal University with the selected variables age, sex, type of high school graduated, monthly household income and number of the household members.

It revealed that variables such as age, sex, type of high school graduated, monthly household income have no significant difference on the student-teachers learning engagement. On the other hand, the number of the household members revealed a significant difference in the student-teachers learning engagement.

This study may imply that when the respondents were classified as to the number of the household members, this really affect the learning engagement of the student-teachers. The indicator of the number of household members can share real-life experiences at the same time, creating an atmosphere of counseling and guiding on the problematic situations had been encountered. One of the respondents said,

Extract 3

"I learned how to deal with people, I learned how to interact and socialize with my co-students, and this helps me to get along... I learned how to work in a group. Thus, I know how to develop a smooth relationship with my colleagues."

According to Taylor & Parsons (2011), they expressed that the student's perspective regarding their experiences are being narrated and shared with others. This experience is a part of developmental competencies on social and emotional aspects for a useful learning experience which some students provided to create a visual of their real skills. In the same vein, the input of activeness and active learning is central to the environments, and applying knowledge on the student's understanding in real-world situations, reflection, and firsthand experiences. It also engaged with their peers and were more inclined to make progress in their college learning and development. It argued that not only should teachers recognize the opportunity to maximize learning with their other students through collaborative learning (Ford, 2009). Table 3 shows the data.

Table 3. Significant Difference of Student-Teachers Learning Engagement with the Selected Variables

Variables Groupings	P value	Adjectival Interpretation
Age	0.640	Not Significant
Sex	0.741	Not Significant
Type of High School Graduated	0.409	Not Significant
Monthly Household Income	0.549	Not Significant
Number of Household Members	0.021*	Significant

*p<0.05significant at 0.05 alpha

Objective 4 focused on a significant correlation between and among the English major student-teachers' learning engagement at Leyte Normal University in the components of student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, emphasizing time-on-task, communicating high expectations, and diverse talents and ways of learning. The study revealed a significant correlation between and among the English major student-teachers' learning engagement at Leyte Normal University in the components mentioned. The elements of learning engagement which are adopted from the experts proved that they associated with each other.

Table 4. Significant Correlation among Student-Teachers Learning Engagement

Components	Student-faculty contact	Cooperation among students	Active learning	Prompt feedback
Student-faculty contact	-	0.000*	0.000*	0.001*
Cooperation among students	0.000*	-	0.000*	0.004*
Active learning	0.000*	0.000*	-	0.001*
Prompt feedback	0.001*	0.004*	0.001*	-
Emphasizing time-on-task	0.000*	0.001*	0.002*	0.000*
Communicating high expectations	0.001*	0.007*	0.001*	0.001*
Diverse talents and ways of learning	0.001*	0.002*	0.000*	0.013*

*p<0.05significant at 0.05 alpha

Emphasizing time-on-task	Communicating high expectations	Diverse talents and ways of learning
0.000*	0.001*	0.001*
0.001*	0.007*	0.002*
0.002*	0.001*	0.000*
0.000*	0.001*	0.013*
-	0.000*	0.001*
0.000*	-	0.000*
0.001*	0.000*	-

Machumu et al. (2018) mentioned that learning high-quality achieves positive outcomes by challenging sociocultural contexts requires active student participation and involvement in authentic learning activities. This theory influences active student engagement in dynamic and complex academic learning environments which necessitates teamwork, collaborative learning, shared experiences and co-creation of meaning. One of the respondents said,

Extract 3

"I guess it's for the teacher to be creative and resourceful. Use the resources that are available in such a way that the students would be engaged or actively participate in class."

Therefore, it is true among student-teachers who are majors in English that they maximized their learning engagement experiences from the classroom and beyond. It is also a manifestation of quality teaching towards students and the students' performance in both academic and extra-curricular activities in the institution. According to Campana & Peterson (2013), the students are required to apply their knowledge, evaluate how others have used to learn and create their solutions to practical problems. They also take more likely to recall and use their experiences in the outside environment of the classroom. Table 4 shows the data.

CONCLUSION

The present study denotes an initial foray among the learning engagement components which are considered essential and must be utilized in and out of the classroom among students in any level and course/program. These learning engagement components are student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, emphasizing time-on-task, communicating high expectations, and diverse talents and ways of learning which these skills are essential in acquiring the knowledge needed in the future endeavor of the learners. It is necessary to inculcate to the student-teachers that teaching is a passion and not only a profession but a vocation to touch the lives of the individual from the grassroots and the ordinary one.

The institution (LNU) emphasizes the point of quality education that the goal of the present study shows manifestation on how the students were trained and taught to become competitive in their field of specialization as this study identifies the most critical components of learning engagement. Moreover, the study provides evidence that these components of learning engagement are strongly related with one another so it should be retained and emphasized in pursuit of quality and excellent education.

This study suggests that the emerging seminar-training should be conducted to the new faculty in order to update these skills in the components of learning engagement as manifested in the present results to maintain the 100% board examination for teachers in the Languages and Literature Unit of Leyte Normal University.

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