



## ANNUAL SEAAIR CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

# SEAAIR 2024

## THE 24TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

***"Education Creativity and Sustainability in the Digital Era"***

*Volume 4 (November 2024-November 2025)*

*ISSN 2774-0773 (Online)*



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**Annual SEAAIR Conference Proceedings**  
**Volume 4**  
**(November 2024-November 2025)**

**SEAAIR 2024**  
**“EDUCATION CREATIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE DIGITAL ERA”**  
**November 5-7, 2024**

**Published by:**

SEAAIR (South East Asian Association for Institutional Research)

Indexed by EBSCO Academic Databases

Website: <http://www.seaairweb.info/Conference/index.aspx>

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**ISSN 2774-0773 (Online)**



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## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT OF SEAAIR

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With great pleasure, we greet you and welcome you all to our SEAAIR 24th Annual Conference in Da Nang City, Vietnam. We thank everyone for joining us this year.

On behalf of the SEAAIR Executive Committee (SEC), we extend our deepest gratitude to the management of University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang, Vietnam, as this year's Local Organizing Committee (LOC). We sincerely appreciate the enormous task of organizing and hosting this year's SEAAIR 24th Annual Conference under the theme "Education Creativity and Sustainability in the Digital Era."

The theme highlights the interconnectedness of these three concepts and their importance in shaping the future. It underscores the role of education in fostering creative and critical thinkers who are prepared to address sustainability challenges, with digital tools acting as catalysts for this transformation. This theme becomes especially significant for educators, policymakers, and businesses aiming to align education with the demands and responsibilities of the digital and sustainable future.

For over two decades, SEAAIR has remained steadfast in its mission "to benefit, assist, and advance research that enhances the understanding, planning, and operations of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Southeast Asia." We believe SEAAIR has thrived because of its unwavering focus on its core purpose and its commitment to honoring the wisdom and legacy established by its founding members. As a maturing organization, SEAAIR has advanced its pursuit of inclusivity; it has expanded into what we now call SEAAIR Plus, forging partnerships with countries like China, Korea, with notable participation from Japan, Australia, and other international collaborators.

We sincerely thank our distinguished speakers for their generosity of time, expertise, and insights. Their valuable contributions significantly enrich this year's theme discourse, which addresses creativity and sustainability in this fast-paced digital era.

To our presenters and participants, thank you all for joining us. To many of us here, thank you for joining us again for the nth time; we are amazed by your sustained interest in being part of SEAAIR-our prestigious international organization whose noble aim is to advance institutional research that shapes policies and standards of academic institutions to keep up with the challenges of the times, especially in this digital era. We certainly look forward to this year's papers contributing to the broad aim of SEAAIR and their contributions to their institutions' sustainability and creativity.

SEAAIR's Annual Conferences are designed to foster scholarly engagement within diverse cultural contexts. We invite you to join this enriching experience, adding valuable dimensions to your academic pursuits and cultural exploration. We wish everyone a meaningful experience at this SEAAIR 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. Thank you.

Prof. Ma. Florecilla C. Cinches, PhD President



## WELCOME MESSAGE FROM ORGANIZER

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Honorable guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the local organizing committee, I take great pride to warmly welcome all international as well as local delegates to **SEAAIR 2024 – The 24th Annual Conference**, hosted this year at University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang (UD-UFLS).

In continuance of the success of holding many international conferences like VietTESOL International Convention, AsiaCALL International Conference, GLoCALL International Conference, etc. this year, we have the privilege to be chosen as the host for SEAAIR 2024 – The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference by the esteemed Southeast Asian Association for Institutional Research (SEAAIR).

The SEAAIR Conference has become a highly anticipated annual gathering, bringing together academics and professionals to discuss the latest trends and challenges in education. This event serves as a valuable platform for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the development of innovative solutions. This year, with the theme “*Education Creativity and Sustainability in the Digital Era*” represented in 5 sub-themes (Sub-theme 1: Creative and Sustainable Education and Cultural Dimensions; Sub-theme 2: Empowering Creative Education Technologies and Pedagogies; Sub-theme 3: Sustainable Education Quality Assurance, Sub-theme 4: Sustainable Education Governance and Internationalization, and Sub-theme 5: New Dimensions in Language and Humanities Education), SEAAIR 2024 welcomes and embraces new and contemporary approaches to education in the digital era.

SEAAIR 2024 is also organized in commemoration of the important and joyous events: *30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the University of Danang Foundation (1994-2024)* and *40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UD-UFLS Foundation (1985-2025)*. UD-UFLS is one of the twelve institutional members of the University of Danang. The growth and achievements of UD-UFLS have significantly contributed to the overall success of the University of Danang, solidifying its position as one of the leading universities in Viet Nam. UD-UFLS offers courses on popular foreign languages (English, French, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai), Foreign Language Teacher Education, International Studies, Oriental Studies and Vietnamese Language and Culture. After forty years of establishment and development, UD-UFLS has become a center for doing research in foreign languages and cultures, serving socio-economic development of the Central and Highlands region as well as the whole country. In recent years, UD-UFLS has enhanced the cooperation with reputable international organizations, foreign institutions, and universities worldwide. UD-UFLS has also become a venue for successful international conferences.

In this great event, UD-UFLS appreciates strong support from the co-organizers and partners: Southeast Asian Association for Institutional Research; Regional English Language Office, U.S. Embassy in Ha Noi; Udon Thani Rajabhat University, Thailand; Bank for Investment and



Development of Viet Nam, Hai Van Branch; Viet Nam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, Cho Moi Branch; Cengage Learning Viet Nam, Macmillan Education Viet Nam. Without their generosity, close collaboration, and outstanding work, we would not be able to create a meaningful environment to support your full participation.

All the members of the organizing committee and staff have also been working very hard. We would like to thank them for their dedication, time, and efforts. I also take this chance to express my appreciation to my colleagues from all faculties and functional departments of UD-UFLS for great contributions to the organization of the conference.

Here, we come from different backgrounds, from various countries with differing systems, from the same country but different institutions, carrying out different functions. However, I believe that we share something in common, a desire to learn from one another. Thank you all for your presence and participation. You are the very important part of the success of the conference.

Let me now close by wishing you a delightful and successful SEAAIR 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Phuc', is written over a horizontal line.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tran Huu Phuc

***Rector, University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang  
Chair of Local Organizing Committee***

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# SEAAIR 2024: THE 24<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

## November 5 - 7, 2024

Time: + Pre-conference Sessions: November 04, 2024

+ Main Sessions: November 05, 06, & 07, 2024

Venue: University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang

*No. 131 Luong Nhu Hoc St., Cam Le Dist., Da Nang City, Vietnam*

Time	Content	
Monday, November 04, 2024		
14:00 - 14:15	Set-up	
14:15 - 14:25	Statement of Purpose & Introduction of Delegates	
14:25 - 14:30	Opening Remarks by the Leadership of UD-UFLS	
14:30 - 15:10	Pre-conference Session 01  Prof. Dr. Anne Pomerantz, University of Pennsylvania, USA  “Enhance your Approach to Assessment: AI Tools for Language Educators”	Pre-conference Session 02  Dr. Nguyen Bich Dieu, Dr. Nguyen Thi My Hang, Ms. Nguyen Thi Lan Anh, Ms. Nguyen Doan Thao Chi, University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang  “Adapting Materials for Inclusive Language Learning with AI-Supported Solutions”
15:10 - 15:50		Pre-conference Session 03  Dr. Nguyen Nu Thuy Uyen, University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang  “Teachers’ Conceptions of Online Teaching and Implications for Practice”
15:50 - 16:00		Tea Break
16:00 - 16:40		Pre-conference Session 04  Mr. Le Van Ba, Dr. Tran Thi Thuy Oanh & Ms. Tran Thi Dieu Hien, University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang

Time	Content	
		<i><b>“The Innovative Methods of Improving the Training quality: A Case at FESP - UFLS”</b></i>
<b>Tuesday, November 05, 2024</b>		
<b>07:30 - 08:00</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony</b>	Set-up
<b>08:00 - 08:15</b>		Welcome Performance
<b>08:15 - 08:20</b>		Statement of Purpose & Introduction of Delegates
<b>08:20 - 08:25</b>		Opening Remarks by the Leadership of UD-UFLS
<b>08:25 - 08:30</b>		Welcome Speech by the Leadership of SEAAIR
<b>08:30 - 08:35</b>		Speech by the Leadership of The University of Danang
<b>08:35 - 08:40</b>		Exchange of Mementos between UD-UFLS and SEAAIR
<b>08:45 - 08:50</b>		Flower Presentation to the Keynote Speakers and Sub-Committee Chairs
<b>08:50 - 08:55</b>		Appreciation to Sponsors
<b>08:55 - 09:00</b>		Group Photo Session & Closing of the Opening Ceremony
<b>09:00 - 09:45</b>	Keynote Address 01 <b>Prof. Dr. Anne Pomerantz</b> , University of Pennsylvania, USA <i><b>“Meet Your AI Assistant: Teaching English in and for a Tech-Enhanced World”</b></i>	
<b>09:50 - 10:35</b>	Keynote Address 02 <b>Asst. Prof. Dr. Phunarat Phiphithkul</b> , Dean of the Faculty of Education, Udon Thani Rajabhat University, Thailand <i><b>“Creative and Sustainable Education in the Educational Fund Schools”</b></i>	
<b>10:35 - 10:50</b>	Tea Break	
<b>10:50 - 12:30</b>	Parallel Sessions	
<b>12:40 - 14:00</b>	Lunch Time	

Time	Content
14:00 - 14:45	Keynote Address 03 <b>Dr. Bao Kham</b> , President of VietCALL (Vietnamese Association of Computer-assisted Language Learning) <i>“Useful Tool or Passing Fad? The Role of Chatbots in ELT”</i>
14:55 - 15:25	Parallel Sessions
15:25 - 15:45	Tea Break
15:45 - 17:30	Parallel Sessions
<b>Wednesday, November 06, 2024</b>	
08:00 - 08:45	Keynote Address 04 <b>Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Van Long</b> , Vice Rector of University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang, Vice President of VietCALL <i>“Preparing for the Digital Future: Building a Digital Mindset for Educational Success”</i>
08:55 - 09:25	Parallel Sessions
09:25 - 09:45	Tea Break
09:45 - 12:00	Parallel Sessions
12:00 - 14:00	Lunch Time
14:00 - 14:45	Keynote Address 05 <b>Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong</b> , Vice Dean of the Faculty of English, University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang <i>“Current Trends of Technology in Education: ChatGPT Use in Language learning and Translation”</i>
14:55 - 15:25	Parallel Sessions
15:25 - 15:45	Tea Break
15:45 - 16:50	Parallel Sessions
18:00 - 20:00	Cultural Night
<b>Thursday, November 07, 2024</b>	
08:00 - 08:45	Keynote Address 06 <b>Mr. Andrew Duenas</b> , Senior Academic Consultant of Cengage Learning Vietnam <i>“Sustainable Teaching in the Digital Era: Empowering Creative Technologies and Pedagogies”</i>



Time	Content	
08:45 - 10:15	Panel Session	
10:15 - 10:30	Tea Break	
10:30 - 11:30	Annual General Meeting	
11:30 - 11:40	<b>Closing Ceremony</b>	Set-up
11:40 - 11:45		Statement of Purpose & Introduction of Delegates
11:45 - 11:50		Closing Remarks by the Leadership of UD-UFLS
11:50 - 11:55		Speech by the Leadership of SEAAIR
11:55 - 12:05		Presentation of the Conference Summary Video
12:05 - 12:10		Presentation of Certificates to the Sub-Committee Chairs
12:10 - 12:15		MOU Signing Ceremony between SEAAIR and the Host Institution for the SEAAIR 2025
12:15 - 12:20		Flag Handover Ceremony to the Host Institution of the SEAAIR 2025
12:20 - 12:25		Speech by the Host Institution of the SEAAIR 2025
12:25 - 12:30		Group Photo Session & Closing
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Time	
14:00 - 17:30	City Tour	

# ORAL PRESENTATION PROGRAM

## ROOM 1 (HA101)

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
<b>Tuesday, November 05, 2024</b>		
<b>08:00 - 09:30</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony (Hall A)</b>	
<b>09:00 - 09:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 1 (Hall A)</b>	Mr. Le Duong & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>09:50 - 10:35</b>	<b>Keynote Address 2 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Tran Huu Phuc & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>10:50 - 11:20</b>	<b>Analyzing the Syntactic Patterns and Functional Roles of Code-Switching Among College Students</b> <i>Charito Ong, John Derek Flores &amp; Sterling Ong</i>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Nguyen Thi Quynh Hoa & Dr. Vo Nguyen Thuy Trang
<b>11:25 - 11:55</b>	<b>Social and Language Skills in the Human Sciences Era: A Cost-Benefit Simulator</b> <i>Jay Somasundaram &amp; Alice McDonald</i>	
<b>12:00 - 12:30</b>	<b>An Investigation into the Use of Functional Approach to Translation in a Grammar Course at a University in Vietnam</b> <i>Nguyen Thi Thu Huong &amp; Nguyen Thi Cat Phuong</i>	
<b>12:30 - 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
<b>14:00 - 14:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 3 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Nguyen Van Long & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
14:55 - 15:25	<b>Pre-Service Primary Teachers' Perspectives on Formative Assessment's Role in Fostering Academic Self-Efficacy</b> <i>Thi Lan Anh Nguyen</i>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Luu Quy Khuong & Ms. Tran Thi Minh Ngoc
15:25 - 15:45	<b>Tea Break</b>	
15:45 - 16:15	<b>A Study on the Internationalization of Higher Education in China: Focusing on Confucius Institutes</b> <i>YingShui Zhang, Jang Wan Ko &amp; XiWen Xu</i>	
16:20 - 16:50	<b>Exploring Trends and Preferences: A Bibliometric Analysis of College Students Choices</b> <i>Grace S. Pimentel, Mary Louise Pimentel &amp; Maria Christina Rezon</i>	
16:55 - 17:25	<b>Integration of Active Learning into British Culture Teaching</b> <i>Luu Quy Khuong &amp; Luu Ngoc Bao Thi</i>	
Wednesday, November 06, 2024		
08:00 - 08:45	<b>Keynote Address 4 (Hall A)</b>	Dr. Huynh Ngoc Mai Kha & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
08:55 - 09:25	<b>Ethnolinguistic Exploration on Translanguaging Narratives in Coastal Villages in the Philippines as Inputs for the Development of Storybook in K to 12</b> <i>Joefry Q. Barcebal &amp; Grace C. Pastolero</i>	Dr. Vo Nguyen Thuy Trang & Ms. Nguyen Thi Cam Ha
09:25 - 09:45	<b>Tea Break</b>	
09:45 - 10:15	<b>Exploring “Attitude” in English Motivational Quotes on Success and Failure: An Appraisal Theory Perspective</b> <i>Nguyen Thi Quynh Hoa &amp; Vo Nguyen Thuy Trang</i>	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
10:20 - 10:50	<b>An Analysis of Engagement Resources of Donald Trump's 2024 Presidential Re-election Announcement Speech</b> <i>Nguyen Thi Bich Giang</i>	
10:55 - 11:25	<b>Measuring Students' Academic Performance: The Role of Non-Cognitive Skills in College Admission Test</b> <i>Mary Louise S. Pimentel, Jason O. Manaois &amp; Grace S. Pimentel</i>	
11:30 - 12:00	<b>Blended Learning Perspectives: Innovating Education with University of Sto-Tomas Legazpi Graduate Students</b> <i>Susana C. Cabredo, Sylva Elena B. Payonga, and Ma. Christine R. Boduan</i>	
12:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
14:00 - 14:45	<b>Keynote Address 5 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Phan Van Hoa & Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy
	<b>Thursday, November 07, 2024</b>	
08:00 - 08:45	<b>Keynote Address 6 (Hall A)</b>	Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong & Mr. Duong Quang Trung
08:45 - 10:15	<b>Panel Session (Hall A)</b>	
10:15 - 10:30	<b>Tea Break</b>	
10:30 - 11:30	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	
11:30 - 12:30	<b>Closing Ceremony (Hall A)</b>	
12:30 - 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
14:00 - 17:30	<b>City Tour</b>	

**ROOM 2 (HA102)**

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
<b>Tuesday, November 05, 2024</b>		
<b>08:00 - 09:30</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony (Hall A)</b>	
<b>09:00 - 09:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 1 (Hall A)</b>	Mr. Le Duong & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>09:50 - 10:35</b>	<b>Keynote Address 2 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Tran Huu Phuc & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>10:50 - 11:20</b>	<b>Promoting Climate Change Awareness Through English Language Teaching: English Teachers' Perceptions</b> <i>Itha Priyastiti &amp; Suryani Kurniawi Kahi Leba Kapoe</i>	Dr. Nguyen Nu Thuy Uyen & Ms. Nguyen Thanh Hong Ngoc
<b>11:25 - 11:55</b>	<b>An Investigation of the Relationship between Deming Cycle and Good Governance Practices of the Support Services Division of Ramkhamhaeng University: A Correlational Study</b> <i>Narat Wattanapanit, Krisda Tanchaisak &amp; Busara Niyomves</i>	
<b>12:00 - 12:30</b>	<b>Internationalization Policies in Korean Higher Education: Attracting and Managing International Students</b> <i>Zhang Yuningjing, Liu Ting &amp; Jang Wan Ko</i>	
<b>12:30 - 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
<b>14:00 - 14:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 3 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Nguyen Van Long & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>14:55 - 15:25</b>	<b>International Studies: A Sustainable Approach to Educational Management</b> <i>Nguyen Thi Ngoc Anh, Le Thi Phuong Loan &amp; Nguyen Thi Hoang Bau</i>	Dr. Nguyen Bich Dieu & Mr. Duong Quang Trung



Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
15:25 - 15:45	Tea Break	
15:45 - 16:15	Navigating the Spectrum: Understanding ASD Challenges in Higher Education in Malaysia <i>Koh Yit Yan</i>	
16:20 - 16:50	Explaining Individual Work Performance in An Academic Setting <i>Grace V. Santos &amp; Ma. Florecilla C. Cinches</i>	
16:55 - 17:25	The Impact of Servant Leadership on School's Organizational Performance <i>Jhonatan A. Letada &amp; Alicia S. Mapa</i>	
Wednesday, November 06, 2024		
08:00 - 08:45	Keynote Address 4 (Hall A)	Dr. Huynh Ngoc Mai Kha & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
08:55 - 09:25	Exploring Linguistic Patterns: Cultural Insights <i>Sol J. Dalonos, Josan C. Fermano &amp; Efren V. Mercado</i>	Dr. Tran Thi Thuy Oanh & Ms. Nguyen Le An Phuong
09:25 - 09:45	Tea Break	
09:45 - 10:15	A Study on The Motivations, Advantages, Barriers of Adult Learners of English: A Case of Female Students in Vietnam <i>Nguyen Le An Phuong &amp; Nguyen Thi Hoang Bau</i>	
10:20 - 10:50	The Cross-Sectional Analysis of Happiness Among Thai Undergraduate Students <i>Wanatphong Benjaphong, Nampech Tasaboomrung &amp; Korpong Namwat</i>	
10:55 - 11:25	Exploring the Growth Mindset of Pre-Service Teacher Students in a Thai Context: An Exploratory Study <i>Tanutchaporn Namwat, Chitraporn Boonthanom &amp; Nanpapat Amborisuth</i>	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
11:30 - 12:00	<b>Guidelines for Developing Classroom Research Competency of Pre-Service Teachers, Ramkhamhaeng University</b> <i>Bongkoch Thongeam, Chain Chuanchom &amp; Ekwatchara Pornchinda</i>	
12:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
14:00 - 14:45	<b>Keynote Address 5 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Phan Van Hoa & Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy
14:55 - 15:25	<b>Values of Filipino Seafarers: The Formula to a Successful Career</b> <i>Agustin D. Bedia, Rolando A. Alimen &amp; Ma. Cecilia D. Alimen</i>	Dr. Nguyen Bich Dieu & Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Nhat Minh
15:45 - 16:15	<b>The Transformative Power of Technology in Education: Enhancing Accessibility, Engagement, and Personalized Learning Amidst Emerging Challenges</b> <i>Yosep Undung</i>	
16:20 - 16:50	<b>Measuring Socio-emotional Learning of College Students across Metro Manila</b> <i>Maria Loida Faye C. Borbon</i>	
16:55 - 17:25	<b>Measuring Teachers' Adversity Quotient and General Well-Being: The Online Teaching Challenges</b> <i>Rosella O. Ortiz &amp; Zenaida G. Gersana</i>	
<b>Thursday, November 07, 2024</b>		
08:00 - 08:45	<b>Keynote Address 6 (Hall A)</b>	Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong & Mr. Duong Quang Trung
08:45 - 10:15	<b>Panel Session (Hall A)</b>	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
10:15 - 10:30	Tea Break	
10:30 - 11:30	Annual General Meeting	
11:30 - 12:30	Closing Ceremony (Hall A)	
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00 - 17:30	City Tour	

### ROOM 3 (HA103)

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
<b>Tuesday, November 05, 2024</b>		
08:00 - 09:30	Opening Ceremony (Hall A)	
09:00 - 09:45	Keynote Address 1 (Hall A)	Mr. Le Duong & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
09:50 - 10:35	Keynote Address 2 (Hall A)	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Tran Huu Phuc & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
10:50 - 11:20	<b>Validation and Design of Technology-Based Training Programs within CITL Frameworks</b> <i>Charito Ong, Elva Maramara &amp; Mary Ann Pajegal</i>	Dr. Le Thi Phuong Loan & Ms. Phan Thi Hai Yen
11:25 - 11:55	<b>An Investigation of Vocabulary Learning Strategies Employed by Engineering Students</b> <i>Nguyen Trang Dung</i>	
12:00 - 12:30	<b>The Impact of IDDIRR Model-based in ICT Training Workshop on In-serviced Teachers in Vietnam</b> <i>Pham Thi To Nhu &amp; Tran Ngoc Quyen Quyen</i>	
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
14:00 - 14:45	Keynote Address 3 (Hall A)	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Nguyen Van Long & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
14:55 - 15:25	Chatbot In Higher Education: Empirical in Applying Chatbot for Finding The Theories <i>Luong Anh Linh &amp; Luong Thuy Tien</i>	Dr. Vo Nguyen Thuy Trang & Ms. Nguyen Thi Lan Anh
15:25 - 15:45	Tea Break	
15:45 - 16:15	The Short Form Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T-SF): Development of a Short-Form Version and Its Psychometric Properties <i>Manika Wisessathorn, Petch Wijitnawin &amp; Sawian Kaewwongsa</i>	
16:20 - 16:50	Narrative Empowerment through Issue-based Learning: Practices in Economics Courses <i>Yen-Ling Lin &amp; Min-Chi Hsieh</i>	
16:55 - 17:25	Assessing the Awareness, Utilization, Perceived Benefits, and Challenges of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools in Academic Writing among Graduate Students <i>Dennis V. Madrigal &amp; Mary Edillis O. Moleño</i>	
Wednesday, November 06, 2024		
08:00 - 08:45	Keynote Address 4 (Hall A)	Dr. Huynh Ngoc Mai Kha & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
08:55 - 09:25	Community-Service Learning Models and Prospects of Integrating into University Curriculum in Viet Nam <i>Le Thi Phuong Loan &amp; Vo Thi Giang</i>	Dr. Pham Thi To Nhu & Mr. Duong Quang Trung
09:25 - 09:45	Tea Break	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
09:45 - 10:15	<b>The Cooperation between Experiential Metaphors and Logical Metaphors in Creating Texts from Systemic Functional Linguistics</b> <i>Phan Van Hoa &amp; Gia Thi Tuyet Nhung</i>	
10:20 - 10:50	<b>The Impact of Psychological Well-being and Performance Among Malaysian University Athletes</b> <i>Rosmaria Omar, Tajularipin Sulaiman &amp; Kai Yan Wong</i>	
10:55 - 11:25	<b>A Contrastive Analysis of Conceptual Metaphor “MEDIA IS A SOLDIER” in Vietnamese and English Electronic news</b> <i>Nguyen Luu Diep Anh &amp; Ho Trinh Quynh Thu</i>	
11:30 - 12:00	<b>Using the National Geographic Website in CLIL Teaching to Improve ESP Learners' Motivation and Learning Outcomes</b> <i>Duong Quang Trung &amp; Nguyen Tran Uyen Nhi</i>	
12:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
14:00 - 14:45	<b>Keynote Address 5 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Phan Van Hoa & Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy
14:55 - 15:25	<b>A Study of Cultural Diversity Integrated in Project-Based Learning to Improve Student Creativity</b> <i>Sri Rejeki Sitohang, Angelia Patricia Situmorang, Familia Novita Simanjuntak &amp; Candra Ditasona</i>	Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy & Mr. Duong Quang Trung
15:45 - 16:15	<b>A Close Reading Analysis of the Technical and Narrative Elements of Korean Drama: A Basis for Developing Instructional Materials in Communication</b> <i>Rhoda G. Campillan</i>	



Time		Content	Moderator & Secretary
16:20 - 16:50	The Relationship Between Learning Readiness, Motivation, and Learning Styles Among Focus Students in the Gombak District Transformation Program 2024: Implications for Intervention Module Development <i>Abdul Aziz Ismail, Tajularipin Sulaiman &amp; Wong Kai Yan</i>		
16:55 - 17:25	Engagements, Collaborations, and Practices of Maritime University in the Philippines towards Empowering Education Technologies <i>Rolando A. Alimen, Agustin D. Bedia, Ma. Cecilia D. Alimen</i>		
Thursday, November 07, 2024			
08:00 - 08:45	Keynote Address 6 (Hall A)		Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong & Mr. Duong Quang Trung
08:45 - 10:15	Panel Session (Hall A)		
10:15 - 10:30	Tea Break		
10:30 - 11:30	Annual General Meeting		
11:30 - 12:30	Closing Ceremony (Hall A)		
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break		
14:00 - 17:30	City Tour		

## ROOM 4 (HB101)

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
<b>Tuesday, November 05, 2024</b>		
<b>08:00 - 09:30</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony (Hall A)</b>	
<b>09:00 - 09:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 1 (Hall A)</b>	Mr. Le Duong & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>09:50 - 10:35</b>	<b>Keynote Address 2 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Tran Huu Phuc & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>10:50 - 11:20</b>	<b>Use of Information and Communication Technologies Among Library and Information Science (LIS) Students of Higher Education Institutions in Iloilo City</b> <i>Cozette C. Gregorios</i>	Dr. Nguyen Thi My Hang & Ms. Tran Thi Minh Ngoc
<b>11:25 - 11:55</b>	<b>Are Textbooks Enough? A Critical Look at Academic Collocation Representation in EFL Materials</b> <i>Thao Nguyen Nguyen &amp; Thi My Hang Nguyen</i>	
<b>12:00 - 12:30</b>	<b>Charting the Utilization of Machine Learning Algorithms in Faculty Evaluation: A Bibliometric Review</b> <i>Mateo Borbon, Jr.</i>	
<b>12:30 - 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
<b>14:00 - 14:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 3 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Nguyen Van Long & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>14:55 - 15:25</b>	<b>Driving Educational Excellence: AI-Powered Predictions of Faculty Effectiveness</b> <i>Mateo Borbon, Jr., Jeffrie Atendido &amp; Adlin Mae Dimasuay</i>	Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy & Ms. Nguyen Thanh Hong Ngoc
<b>15:25 - 15:45</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
15:45 - 16:15	<b>Designing a Collaborative Strategy for the Promotion of an Intensified Research Culture in Divine Word College of Legazpi</b> <i>Alicia S. Mapa &amp; Ma. Cristita T. Nuñez</i>	
16:20 - 16:50	<b>Breaking the Ice: Using Flipgrid to Enhance English Speaking Skills</b> <i>Phan Thi Anh Nga, Le Huong Hoa &amp; Phan Gia Anh Vu</i>	
16:55 - 17:25	<b>Peer Facilitation Techniques in Asynchronous Online Discussion: A Case Study of Vietnamese EFL Students</b> <i>Uyen Nu Thuy Nguyen</i>	
Wednesday, November 06, 2024		
08:00 - 08:45	<b>Keynote Address 4 (Hall A)</b>	Dr. Huynh Ngoc Mai Kha & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
08:55 - 09:25	<b>Use of EPP Numeracy App to Teach Functional skills</b> <i>Jarina Peer</i>	Dr. Ngo Thi Hien Trang & Dr. Nguyen Nu Thuy Uyen
09:25 - 09:45	<b>Tea Break</b>	
09:45 - 10:15	<b>Variations in Undergraduate Language Learning Strategies: Insights from Oxford's Strategy in Language Learning</b> <i>Lorena M. Taglucop, Arian M. Edullantes &amp; Mico Ray E. Taglucop</i>	
10:20 - 10:50	<b>Why Using Mind Maps is Ineffective in Listening Comprehension: The Case of University of Foreign Language Studies</b> <i>Ngo Thi Hien Trang</i>	
10:55 - 11:25	<b>Navigating Challenges and Innovations: Enhancing the Teaching-Research Nexus in Taiwan Academics</b> <i>Sophia Shi-Huei Ho &amp; Wei-Jiun Huang</i>	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
11:30 - 12:00	<b>Statistical Literacy of Grade 10 Students: Basis for the Development of Instructional Materials in Probability and Statistics for SHS</b> <i>Rhodora A. Cartagena</i>	
12:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
14:00 - 14:45	<b>Keynote Address 5 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Phan Van Hoa & Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy
<b>Thursday, November 07, 2024</b>		
08:00 - 08:45	<b>Keynote Address 6 (Hall A)</b>	Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong & Mr. Duong Quang Trung
08:45 - 10:15	<b>Panel Session (Hall A)</b>	
10:15 - 10:30	<b>Tea Break</b>	
10:30 - 11:30	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	
11:30 - 12:30	<b>Closing Ceremony (Hall A)</b>	
12:30 - 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
14:00 - 17:30	<b>City Tour</b>	

## ROOM 5 (HB102)

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
<b>Tuesday, November 05, 2024</b>		
<b>08:00 - 09:30</b>	<b>Opening Ceremony (Hall A)</b>	
<b>09:00 - 09:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 1 (Hall A)</b>	Mr. Le Duong & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>09:50 - 10:35</b>	<b>Keynote Address 2 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Tran Huu Phuc & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>10:50 - 11:20</b>	<b>Multidimensional Parameters and Working Conditions Among Frontliners: An Intervention</b> <i>Charito Ong, Mary Ann Pajegal &amp; Elva Maramara</i>	Dr. Ngo Thi Hien Trang & Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoang Bau
<b>11:25 - 11:55</b>	<b>Implementation of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning in a Catholic School: Benchmarking from the Standards of Quality in Basic Education Schools</b> <i>Marisa B. Petalla</i>	
<b>12:00 - 12:30</b>	<b>Level of Financial Literacy and Financial Management Practices Among Working College Students in a Higher Education Institution</b> <i>Kimberly Q. Salvaleon &amp; Joseph Karl C. Tatlonghari</i>	
<b>12:30 - 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
<b>14:00 - 14:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 3 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Nguyen Van Long & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
<b>14:55 - 15:25</b>	<b>Coping Levels and Teaching Performance of Faculty</b> <i>Evelyn P. Magdalena</i>	Dr. Nguyen Thi Thanh Thanh & Mr. Tran Huu Thuan
<b>15:25 - 15:45</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
15:45 - 16:15	<b>Tracer Study of the MPM Graduates of DWCL Graduate School of Business and Management, Batches 2019 to 2023</b> <i>Teresita L. Nacion</i>	
16:20 - 16:50	<b>S.U.S.T.A.I.N.A.B.L.E. Learning Outcomes: A Nudge for Sustainable Education Quality Assurance</b> <i>Dao Phong Lam &amp; Trinh Quoc Lap</i>	
16:55 - 17:25	<b>Faculty Performance Evaluation: Looking through its Lens for Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Teaching-Learning Management</b> <i>Arian M. Edullantes, Therese June Aranas &amp; Maria Angeles D. Hinosolango</i>	
Wednesday, November 06, 2024		
08:00 - 08:45	<b>Keynote Address 4 (Hall A)</b>	Dr. Huynh Ngoc Mai Kha & Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong
08:55 - 09:25	<b>Assessment and Evaluation of the Transition Skills of Students with Special Needs: Basis for a Skills Enhancement Program</b> <i>Sol J. Dalonos, Therese June V. Aranas &amp; Rira Raschelle O. Bullecer</i>	Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy & Ms. Tang Thi Ha Van
09:25 - 09:45	<b>Tea Break</b>	
09:45 - 10:15	<b>Constructing Performance Indicators for University-Industry Collaboration Research and Development in Universities of Science and Technology in Taiwan</b> <i>Jia-Yin Hong</i>	
10:20 - 10:50	<b>Fidelity in Diversity: The impact of Trust, Integrity and Diversity on Inclusion in Malaysian Open and Distance Learning</b> <i>Rosinah Mahmood, Rosmaria Omar &amp; Bibi Nabi Ahmad Khan</i>	

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
10:55 - 11:25	<b>Examining Self-Perceived Employability: The Case of College Health Care Students in a Private Higher Education Institution</b> <i>Denise O. Orong, Amelda C. Libres, &amp; Dionesio A. Pongo</i>	
11:30 - 12:00	<b>Assessing Stakeholders' Feedback toward Developing, Implementing, and Evaluating Institutional Action Plans for Continuous Improvement</b> <i>Emeliza T. Estimo &amp; Geneveve M. Aguilar</i>	
12:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
14:00 - 14:45	<b>Keynote Address 5 (Hall A)</b>	Assoc.Prof.Dr. Phan Van Hoa & Dr. Nguyen Huu Quy
14:55 - 15:25	<b>The Relationship between Malaysian Pre-University Student-Athletes Mental Health and Future Career Planning</b> <i>Kai Yan Wong, Tajularpin Sulaiman, Wan Marzuki Wan Jaafar</i>	Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong & Ms. Nguyen Thanh Hong Ngoc
15:25 - 15:45	<b>Tea Break</b>	
15:45 - 16:15	<b>Impact of Undefined Curriculum Goals on Teachers' Readiness: A Case Study on Mandarin Curriculum at Malaysia Higher Education Institutions</b> <i>Nursyanaz Amira Rosli, Nuraini Jafri, Tajularipin Sulaiman</i>	
16:20 - 16:50	<b>Program Accreditation in the University of Santo Tomas – Legazpi: An Exploration of Practices towards Sustainable Quality Assurance for Education</b> <i>Angelica R. Sajuela, Jason O. Carmona, Aira Luz B. Lopez</i>	
16:55 - 17:25	<b>A Research-Based Integration Framework for Senior High School Based on Research Productivity of UST-L SHS A.Y. 2017-2023</b> <i>Wyrlo Dela Cruz, Elyza Mae Mao, Chelsea Sacayan</i>	
<b>Thursday, November 07, 2024</b>		

Time	Content	Moderator & Secretary
<b>08:00 - 08:45</b>	<b>Keynote Address 6 (Hall A)</b>	Dr. Nguyen Thi Thu Huong & Mr. Duong Quang Trung
<b>08:45 - 10:15</b>	<b>Panel Session (Hall A)</b>	
<b>10:15 - 10:30</b>	<b>Tea Break</b>	
<b>10:30 - 11:30</b>	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	
<b>11:30 - 12:30</b>	<b>Closing Ceremony (Hall A)</b>	
<b>12:30 - 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
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# Validation and Design of Technology-Based Training Programs within CITL Frameworks

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## ABSTRACT

This research adopted a comprehensive mixed-methods approach to investigate and address the challenges inherent in technology-based training programs within the framework of the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL). Through a combination of focus group discussions (FGDs), interviews, training observations, and quantitative surveys, insights were gathered from a diverse array of stakeholders including 5 CITL coordinators, the CITL Director, 5 CITL trainers, and a substantial cohort of 105 trainees. Qualitative data analysis techniques such as thematic analysis and quantitative statistical methods were employed to systematically analyze the rich data collected, identifying recurring themes, patterns, and discrepancies. A needs assessment survey was conducted to quantitatively pinpoint specific challenges and gaps in the existing training programs. Based on these findings, a technology-based training program was developed, emphasizing the integration of innovative technologies and pedagogical strategies tailored to address identified needs and enhance alignment with CITL's instructional objectives and learner needs. The research provided valuable insights and actionable recommendations for refining technology-based training initiatives within CITL, supporting continuous improvement, and promoting professional development in educational technology integration.

**Keywords:** Validation, Design, Technology-based training programs, CITL frameworks

## Introduction

In this age characterized by rapid technological advancements, the integration of innovative technologies into instructional approaches has become increasingly imperative. At a State University in Northern Mindanao, the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) is dedicated to fostering educational innovation. However, there is a pressing need to validate and design technology-based training programs that effectively equip educators with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in digital learning environments. Recent studies such as those by Grainger and Price (2023), Smith et al. (2022), and Johnson and Kim (2021) underscore the critical role of such programs in enhancing teaching effectiveness and student engagement. Despite this recognized importance, challenges persisted in designing and implementing these programs in a manner that aligns with instructional objectives and learner needs.

As a pioneering entity in an educational innovation, the CITL stood at the forefront of addressing these challenges. With its mission to foster excellence in teaching through the integration of cutting-edge technologies in teacher training, the center served as a setting for investigating the efficacy of technology-based training initiatives. Yet, as the educational trends continue to evolve, it was imperative to continually assess and refine the center's programs to ensure their relevance and effectiveness in meeting the dynamic needs of educators and learners (Brown & Jones, 2024; Lee et al., 2023).

This research endeavored to contribute to this ongoing scenario by conducting a comprehensive examination of technology-based instructional programs. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this study sought to capture the diverse perspectives of stakeholders, including coordinators, instructors, and learners. Through an exploration of

their experiences, challenges, and goals, the paper aimed to identify key areas for improvement and innovation in technology-based training initiatives.

Drawing upon recent advancements in educational research and practice, as well as insights gleaned from the experiences of stakeholders, this study developed targeted interventions and recommendations to enhance the design and implementation of technology-based training programs. With the intent of developing a training program after validating the CITL training framework, the study aligned these initiatives with instructional objectives and learner needs. By integrating the validated framework into the development process, this research aimed to contribute to the advancement of educational technology integration and the promotion of excellence in teaching and learning within the academic community.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the recognized importance of integrating innovative technologies into educational practices, educators at a State University in Northern Mindanao, Philippines, faced significant challenges in effectively utilizing these tools. The Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) aimed to address these challenges by providing technology-based training programs. However, there was a need to validate these programs to ensure they equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in a digital learning environment. This study sought to address the following specific problems:

1. How did stakeholders perceive the effectiveness of current technology-based training programs in improving teaching and student engagement?
2. What challenges and gaps exist in current training methods, hindering alignment with instructional objectives and learner needs?
3. What program was developed to enhance the design and implementation of technology-based training within CITL?

By addressing the problems, this research aimed to develop technology-based training programs, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of educators and learners in this digital age.

## **Framework of the Study**

The study is grounded in the framework of educational technology integration, which emphasizes the systematic use of technology to enhance teaching and learning processes. The theoretical foundation is drawn from Mishra & Koehler's (2006) Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) model, which posits that effective technology integration in education requires a deep understanding of the interplay between technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge. According to the TPACK framework, successful technology-based training programs do not only familiarize educators with new technological tools but also integrate these tools into pedagogical strategies that align with curriculum content, ensuring that educators can effectively use technology to facilitate student learning and engagement.

Additionally, it employed the Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) theory, developed by Everett Rogers (2003), to understand how new technologies are adopted and implemented within educational settings. The DOI theory outlines the process by which innovations are communicated over time among the members of a social system, highlighting factors such as relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability that influence the adoption of new technologies. By applying the DOI theory, the study identified the barriers and facilitators to the adoption of technology-based training programs among educators in the research locale, aiding in the design of the training intervention program that promotes the acceptance and effective use of technological innovations in teaching.

Finally, the paper incorporated principles of needs assessment and program evaluation to methodically evaluate the training programs offered by the CITL. The needs assessment helped identify the specific gaps and requirements of educators, while the program evaluation provided a structured approach to assessing the effectiveness of training interventions, as demonstrated in the study by Gupta, Sleezer, & Russ-Eft (2007). Building upon the findings of the needs assessment, the researchers developed an enhanced

technology-based training program designed to address the identified gaps and meet the specific requirements of educators. By combining these methodologies with the TPACK and DOI frameworks, the researchers developed a comprehensive understanding of the state of technology integration in the university's instructional practices and proposed evidence-based recommendations to enhance the design and implementation of technology-based training programs.

## Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to comprehensively examine the effectiveness of technology-based training programs within the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) at a State University in Northern Mindanao, Philippines. The mixed-methods approach integrated both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis to capture a holistic view of the experiences, challenges, and goals of the CITL stakeholders, including coordinators, trainers, and trainees. This methodology was chosen to leverage the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research, providing a richer and more detailed understanding of the research problem.

The qualitative component involved focus group discussions (FGDs), semi-structured interviews, and training observations. FGDs were conducted with 5 CITL coordinators and 5 CITL trainers to gather in-depth insights into the effectiveness of the existing training programs and identify any challenges faced. Semi-structured interviews were held with the CITL Director to gain a comprehensive understanding of the strategic objectives and overall vision for technology integration. Additionally, training observations were carried out during sessions involving 105 trainees to observe the practical implementation and engagement with the technology-based training programs. The qualitative data collected from these methods were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns.

The quantitative component involved administering a needs assessment survey to the 105 trainees who participated in the technology-based training programs. The survey aimed to quantitatively measure the trainees' perceptions of the training effectiveness, identify specific areas for improvement, and assess the alignment of the training programs with instructional objectives and learner needs. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods to provide a comprehensive overview of the trainees' feedback and to identify statistically significant trends and insights. By integrating the findings from both qualitative and quantitative analyses, the study aimed to develop targeted interventions and recommendations to enhance the design and implementation of technology-based training programs within the CITL framework.

## Results

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of technology-based training programs at the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) in a State University in Northern Mindanao. To achieve this, it examined their impact on teaching effectiveness and student engagement, identified specific challenges and gaps, and subsequently developed an enhanced technology-based training program. The results are organized around these key areas, providing a comprehensive overview of the current state, and suggesting potential improvements for the CITL's training initiatives.

### 1. Effectiveness of Existing Technology-Based Training Programs

Table 1 summarizes the key quantitative findings from the study, highlighting the areas of success and the significant challenges faced in the current training programs.

Table 1: Stakeholders' Perspectives on CITL Training Program Effectiveness

Category	Metric	Result	Percentage (%)
Effectiveness of Training Programs	Trainees reporting increased technology integration in teaching	Positive impact	78%

	Trainers noting improvements in trainee engagement and participation	Positive impact	82%
Challenges and Gaps	Trainees needing more hands-on, practical training sessions	Reported need	67%
	Trainees indicating training sessions were too brief and lacked depth	Reported gap	67%
Training Methodologies	Effectiveness of interactive and collaborative tools vs. administrative tools	Higher rating for interactive tools	Not specified
Proficiency Levels	Training addressing diverse technological proficiency levels	Ineffective one-size-fits-all approach	Reported gap
Support and Follow-Up	Need for ongoing support and follow-up	Reported need	Not specified

These findings revealed that the existing technology-based training programs at the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) had a positive impact on teaching effectiveness and student engagement. Through focus group discussions and surveys, 78% of trainees reported an increase in their ability to integrate technology into their teaching practices, while 82% of trainers noted improvements in trainee engagement and participation. However, both qualitative and quantitative data highlighted that the effectiveness of these programs varied significantly depending on the specific technological tools and instructional strategies used. For instance, tools that supported interactive and collaborative learning were rated more highly compared to those used for administrative or assessment purposes (Smith et al., 2022; Johnson & Kim, 2021).

Considering the positive impact observed in existing technology-based training programs at CITL, it is crucial to build upon these successes while addressing identified areas for improvement. Recent research by Smith et al. (2022) and Johnson & Kim (2021) corroborates the findings of this study, highlighting the importance of tailoring training programs to specific technological tools and instructional strategies. By leveraging insights from these studies, CITL can further refine its training initiatives to prioritize the integration of tools that facilitate interactive and collaborative learning experiences. Moreover, ongoing assessment and evaluation of program effectiveness, as recommended by Grainger & Price (2023), will enable CITL to continually adapt and optimize its training offerings to meet the evolving needs of educators and learners. Through a proactive approach informed by current research, CITL can continue to enhance the impact and effectiveness of its technology-based training programs, ultimately advancing teaching effectiveness and student engagement across the institution.

## 2. Specific Challenges and Gaps in Current Training Methodologies

Despite the overall positive feedback, several challenges and gaps were identified in the current training methodologies. Trainees expressed a need for more hands-on, practical training sessions, as opposed to theoretical instruction. 67% of the surveyed trainees indicated that the training sessions were too brief and lacked depth, preventing them from fully mastering the tools. Additionally, coordinators and trainers pointed out that the current training programs did not adequately address the diverse technological proficiency levels among educators, leading to a one-size-fits-all approach that was ineffective for some participants (Brown & Jones, 2024; Lee et al., 2023). Observations during training sessions also revealed a lack of ongoing support and follow-up, which many trainees felt was essential for reinforcing their learning and ensuring sustained technology integration.

The identified challenges and gaps underscore the importance of a more refined and tailored approach to technology-based training within CITL. Recent studies highlight the effectiveness of immersive and hands-on learning experiences that provide practical application opportunities. For instance, a study by PwC (2023) demonstrated that virtual reality (VR) significantly enhances training effectiveness by offering realistic simulations and safe environments for skill practice. VR-trained employees were found to learn up to four times faster and were more confident in applying their skills compared to traditional classroom

learners. This evidence supports the recommendation for CITL to incorporate similar immersive technologies into their training programs to enhance engagement and mastery of skills.

Furthermore, Tesla’s use of connected car technology with over-the-air software updates exemplifies the value of continuous improvement models facilitated by technology (Whatfix, 2023). Tesla’s approach allows for seamless updates and ongoing enhancements, which parallels the necessity of ongoing support and follow-up in educational training settings. By adopting a similar strategy, CITL can ensure that training is dynamic, adaptable, and continuously responsive to the evolving needs of educators.

Additionally, simulation-based training in nursing education has shown significant improvements in communication skills and program satisfaction among students (PwC, 2023). These findings underscore the effectiveness of simulation as a training tool, highlighting the importance of incorporating more interactive, hands-on sessions in CITL’s training methodologies. This aligns with the need to develop interactive workshops and training modules that provide ample opportunities for participants to apply their learning in real-world contexts.

These case studies provide concrete evidence that supports the claims made in this study, illustrating how technology-driven, immersive, and continuous training strategies can effectively address the current gaps identified in CITL’s programs. By implementing targeted interventions that leverage these insights, CITL can enhance the quality and effectiveness of its training programs, ultimately fostering a culture of innovation and excellence in teaching and learning.

Table 2: Specific Challenges and Gaps in Current Training Methodologies

Challenges and Gaps	Percentage/Feedback	Proposed Solutions	Recommendations
Need for more hands-on training	Practical sessions preferred over theoretical instruction (100%)	Develop interactive workshops and training modules	Provide opportunities for hands-on learning in real-world scenarios
Brief, lacking depth sessions	67% indicated dissatisfaction with session duration and depth	Implement differentiated training strategies	Cater to diverse technological proficiency levels among educators
Programs don't address proficiency levels	Standardized approach ineffective for some participants (75%)	Provide ongoing support and follow-up mechanisms	Essential for sustaining technology integration efforts
Lack of ongoing support	Needed for reinforcing learning and sustaining technology use (100%)	Provide follow-up mechanisms	Ensure ongoing support for technology integration

### 3. Targeted Interventions and Recommendations

Based on the identified challenges and gaps, the researchers developed targeted interventions and recommendations to enhance the training programs at CITL. Firstly, it was recommended to increase the duration and frequency of hands-on training sessions, allowing educators more time to practice and become proficient with new technologies. Additionally, the development of differentiated training modules tailored to varying levels of technological proficiency was suggested to address the diverse needs of the participants (Grainger & Price, 2023). Furthermore, implementing a mentorship and support system, where more experienced educators could provide ongoing assistance and guidance to their peers, was proposed to ensure continuous learning and application of technological skills (Kim & Lee, 2022; Wang et al., 2021). These recommendations aimed to create a more effective and responsive training program that aligns with CITL's

instructional objectives and meets the evolving needs of educators and learners. Table 3 presents the enhanced technology-based training program.

Table 3: Developed Technology-Based Training Program

Module Number	Training Program Component	Topics	Sub-Topics	Technology-Based Application/Skill to be Developed	Objectives
1	Technology Proficiency Assessment	Assessment of Technology Proficiency Levels	Basic Computer Skills Assessment	Basic Computer Skills (e.g., navigating operating systems, file management)	To identify participants' current proficiency levels in using technology tools
2	Differentiated Training Modules	Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced Modules	Introduction to Technology Tools	Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)	To provide participants with foundational knowledge of commonly used technology tools
			Interactive Whiteboard Applications	SMART Notebook, Promethean ActivInspire	To familiarize participants with interactive whiteboard software applications
			Collaborative Tools (e.g., Google Workspace, Microsoft Teams)	Google Docs, Sheets, Slides; Microsoft Teams	To enable participants to effectively collaborate and communicate using online platforms
3	Hands-on Workshops	Practical Application of Technology Tools	Creating Engaging Presentations	Multimedia presentation software (e.g., Prezi, Canva, Miro, Explain Everything, Jamboard, Animoto)	To empower participants to create visually appealing and engaging presentations
			Integrating Multimedia Content	Multimedia creation tools (e.g., Adobe Spark, Powtoon)	To demonstrate how to integrate multimedia elements into teaching materials
			Interactive Lesson Design	Interactive learning platforms (e.g., Nearpod, Kahoot)	To guide participants in designing interactive lessons that promote student engagement and interactivity
4	Peer Mentorship Sessions	Guidance and Support from Experienced Educators	Best Practices in Technology Integration	Classroom management software (e.g., ClassDojo, Seesaw)	To share best practices and tips for effectively integrating technology into teaching
			Addressing Common Challenges	Troubleshooting common issues with technology tools	To provide participants with strategies for overcoming common challenges encountered when using technology in the classroom
5	Ongoing Support and Follow-Up	Post-Training Resources and Assistance	Online Forums and Communities	Education technology forums, social media groups	To provide a platform for ongoing discussion, collaboration, and sharing of resources among participants
			Periodic Check-Ins and Feedback	Online surveys, feedback forms	To solicit feedback from participants and assess the effectiveness of the training program

This designed training program adopts a systematic and comprehensive approach to address the identified needs and challenges in technology-based training within the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL), aligning with contemporary educational research. Drawing upon recent studies such as those by Smith et al. (2022) and Johnson & Kim (2021), which emphasize the importance of tailored training programs in enhancing teaching effectiveness and student engagement, the program structures its modules with clear objectives, topics, and sub-topics. This approach ensures that participants can navigate through the training content logically, building upon their existing knowledge and skills. Additionally, incorporating a technology proficiency assessment at the outset, as advocated by Grainger & Price (2023), ensures that

the training content is tailored to the individual needs and proficiency levels of participants, maximizing the program's effectiveness.

Moreover, the program integrates hands-on workshops and peer mentorship sessions, echoing the findings of recent research by Lee et al. (2023), which highlight the effectiveness of interactive and collaborative learning environments in promoting skill development and knowledge transfer. By providing opportunities for practical application and guidance from experienced educators, the program fosters an environment conducive to active learning and professional growth. Furthermore, the inclusion of ongoing support mechanisms, such as post-training resources and periodic check-ins, is in line with recommendations from Kim & Lee (2022) and Wang et al. (2021), who underscore the importance of continuous learning and follow-up in technology integration initiatives. Overall, by aligning with recent advancements in educational research and practice, the designed training program aims to empower educators at CITL with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices, ultimately enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

## **Conclusions**

This study has provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of technology-based training programs within the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) at a State University in Northern Mindanao, Philippines. Through an evaluation of the existing programs and identification of specific challenges and gaps, as well as the development of targeted interventions and recommendations, several key conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, the effectiveness of the current training programs was highlighted, with positive impacts observed on teaching effectiveness and student engagement. However, the study also revealed specific challenges, such as the need for more hands-on, practical training sessions and the lack of depth in existing training methodologies. These findings underscore the importance of continuously assessing and refining training programs to ensure their relevance and effectiveness in meeting the evolving needs of educators and learners.

Secondly, the development of targeted interventions and recommendations has provided actionable strategies for enhancing the design and implementation of technology-based training programs at CITL. By incorporating differentiated training modules, hands-on workshops, peer mentorship sessions, and ongoing support mechanisms, the designed training program aims to address the identified challenges and foster a supportive learning environment for educators.

In conclusion, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on technology integration in education by offering practical insights and recommendations for improving training initiatives within CITL. By aligning with recent advancements in educational research and practice, the designed training program seeks to empower educators with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices, ultimately enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

## **Recommendations**

To enhance the technology-based training programs at the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL), establishing a continuous evaluation system that incorporates feedback from participants and stakeholders is crucial. This system, supported by data analytics, may help track engagement and performance trends, guiding ongoing improvements. Customized professional development plans tailored to individual needs may be developed using adaptive learning technologies and mentorship to provide personalized support. The integration of emerging technologies through small-scale pilot programs can help educators gradually adapt to new tools, while faculty recognition initiatives may further motivate the adoption of innovative practices.

Collaborative partnerships with industry experts and educational institutions may offer valuable resources, though these partnerships can be challenging to secure due to competing priorities and funding constraints.



CITL can foster these collaborations by targeting stakeholders with a vested interest in educational innovation and proposing mutually beneficial initiatives, such as guest lectures and joint research projects. To ensure long-term sustainability, exploring diverse funding sources like government grants and private sponsorships, along with building a strong narrative around the positive impact of technology integration on student outcomes, may help garner institutional support.

Community engagement and outreach efforts are essential to promote digital literacy beyond the university, although limited access to technology in underserved areas may present challenges. CITL can address these barriers through initiatives like mobile learning labs and virtual platforms that extend access to technology education. To assess the long-term impact of these interventions, CITL may conduct follow-up studies that track educators' progress over time, evaluating changes in teaching practices and student engagement. These studies will provide valuable insights into the sustainability and effectiveness of the training programs, enabling CITL to make data-driven adjustments and continuously improve their initiatives.

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# Multidimensional Parameters and Working Conditions Among Frontliners: An Intervention

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates an intervention aimed at improving the working conditions of frontline service providers at a State University in Northern Mindanao, focusing on multidimensional parameters affecting their performance and well-being. The research involved 50 participants, including administrative staff, customer service representatives, and support personnel who directly interact with students, faculty, and other stakeholders. Employing a research and development design, the study utilized a descriptive method to analyze data collected from focus group discussions, individual interviews, questionnaires, and direct workplace observations. Adapted instruments from Seels and Glasgow (2004) guided the research methodology, with data collection spanning six hours, including video-recorded observations for comprehensive analysis. The findings underscored a critical need for targeted training to enhance service efficiency and improve client interactions. In response, a specialized training program was developed to reorient frontline workers, focusing on skill development and effective customer engagement strategies. This initiative aims to address higher education reforms by improving service delivery standards and boosting customer satisfaction within the university setting, thereby contributing to a more effective and responsive educational environment.

**Keywords:** Parameters, Working conditions, Training

## Introduction

Improving the working conditions of frontline service providers is critical for enhancing overall service delivery and customer satisfaction, especially in higher education institutions where these staff members play a pivotal role in daily operations. Frontline workers, including administrative staff, customer service representatives, and support personnel, directly engage with students, faculty, and other stakeholders, significantly impacting the institutional experience (Brown & White, 2023). These interactions not only influence the smooth functioning of the university but also affect the overall satisfaction and success of its stakeholders. The quality of service provided by these frontline workers can significantly impact institutional reputation, student retention rates, and the effectiveness of educational programs (Jones & Smith, 2022).

The dynamics of higher education environments necessitate a focus on continuous improvement and professional development for frontline workers. Recent reforms in higher education emphasize the importance of optimizing support services to enhance the student experience and institutional efficiency (Lee et al., 2023). As institutions strive to adapt to new educational demands and technologies, there is a growing recognition of the need for targeted interventions to address the challenges faced by frontline workers. These challenges often include insufficient training, high workloads, and limited resources, which can adversely affect their ability to provide high-quality service (Taylor & Evans, 2023). Addressing these issues through well-designed training programs and support mechanisms can lead to significant improvements in service delivery and employee satisfaction.

Moreover, research has shown that effective management of frontline workers' working conditions can lead to improved organizational outcomes and greater employee engagement (Smith & Johnson, 2024). For instance, studies have highlighted that investing in employee training and development not only enhances individual performance but also contributes to a more positive organizational culture (Brown & Green, 2023). In the context of higher education, this translates to more effective interactions with students and

faculty, better management of administrative tasks, and overall improvements in the institutional environment. By exploring and addressing the multifaceted aspects of frontline workers' roles, this study aims to provide insights that can guide the development of interventions tailored to enhance both employee and service outcomes.

Understanding the specific needs and challenges faced by frontline workers is essential for implementing effective reforms and ensuring that these employees are well-equipped to meet the demands of their roles. This study focuses on a research and development approach to explore these needs and evaluate the impact of targeted training programs designed to improve working conditions and service quality. Through a comprehensive analysis of current practices and challenges, the research seeks to contribute to higher education reforms by offering actionable recommendations that can lead to more effective and supportive environments for frontline workers (Smith & Johnson, 2024).

## **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the critical role of frontline workers in higher education, there remains a significant gap in understanding their specific working conditions and the impact these conditions have on service delivery and stakeholder satisfaction. Frontline workers, encompassing roles such as administrative staff and customer service representatives, face various challenges that can affect their efficiency and effectiveness in interacting with students and faculty. These challenges include inadequate training, unclear job expectations, and limited resources, which can hinder their ability to perform optimally (Taylor & Evans, 2023).

The primary problem this study sought to address was the need for targeted interventions to improve the working conditions of these frontline workers. Specifically, there was a lack of comprehensive data on the most pressing issues faced by these employees and how these issues impact their performance and service delivery. Furthermore, there was a need to develop and implement training programs that address these challenges and enhance the skills necessary for effective customer engagement. By examining the current state of frontline workers' working conditions and evaluating the effectiveness of a newly designed training program, this research aimed to provide actionable insights that can contribute to higher education reforms and improve overall service quality within the university.

## **Framework of the Study**

The theoretical framework for this study integrates two key theories: the Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) Model and the Service Quality Theory. These frameworks provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the working conditions of frontline workers and their impact on service delivery.

The Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) Model, proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), emphasizes the balance between job demands and available resources in predicting employee burnout and performance. According to this model, job demands such as workload, time pressure, and role ambiguity can lead to stress and decreased job performance if not counterbalanced by sufficient resources such as support, training, and clear role definitions. In the context of frontline workers at a university, the JD-R Model helps in identifying specific job demands and resources that affect their working conditions and overall service quality. This model supports the development of targeted interventions that address these demands and enhance the resources available to frontline workers, thereby improving their performance and job satisfaction.

Service Quality Theory, particularly the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), provides insights into how service quality can be measured and improved. The SERVQUAL model identifies key dimensions of service quality, including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Applying this model to the context of frontline workers in higher education institutions allows for an assessment of how well these workers meet service quality expectations and where improvements are needed. This theory supports the design of training programs aimed at enhancing specific

aspects of service delivery and ensuring that frontline workers are equipped to meet and exceed stakeholder expectations.

By combining the JD-R Model with Service Quality Theory, this study provides a robust framework for understanding and addressing the challenges faced by frontline workers. This approach facilitates a comprehensive analysis of their working conditions and the development of effective interventions to improve their performance and service quality in the higher education setting.

## **Methodology**

This study employed a research and development (R&D) design to explore and improve the working conditions of frontline workers at a State University in Northern Mindanao. The methodology integrated both descriptive and developmental approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state of frontline service and to develop effective interventions.

### **Participants and Data Collection**

A purposive sampling method was used to select 50 frontline workers, including administrative staff, customer service representatives, and support personnel from various departments within the university. This approach ensured representation from different areas of service, providing a holistic view of the frontline experience. The selected participants reflected the diverse nature of frontline roles, enabling the study to capture a broad range of perspectives on working conditions and service practices.

Data were collected through a combination of focus group discussions, interviews, questionnaires, and workplace observations. These methods were chosen to gather both qualitative and quantitative data, allowing for a thorough analysis of the working conditions and service practices. Focus group discussions and interviews were conducted with the 50 frontline workers to gain insights into their experiences, challenges, and training needs. Questionnaires were distributed to collect quantitative data on perceived working conditions, service efficiency, and client interactions. Additionally, observations of workplace interactions were carried out to assess real-time service delivery and identify areas for improvement. The integration of these data collection methods provided a comprehensive understanding of the frontline workers' environment, highlighting critical areas that needed intervention to enhance their performance and well-being.

The study utilized adapted instruments from Seels and Glasgow (2004), including structured questionnaires and observation checklists, to ensure the reliability and validity of the data collected. Data collection spanned six hours, during which participants completed the questionnaires, engaged in focus group discussions, and were observed during their routine tasks. One of the instruments involved video recording selected interactions to analyze communication patterns and service delivery in detail.

### **Data Analysis**

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends and patterns in the working conditions and service practices. Qualitative data from focus groups and interviews were analyzed thematically, focusing on recurring themes related to training needs, service challenges, and areas for improvement. Observational data were reviewed to corroborate findings from the other data sources and to provide a comprehensive view of the service environment.

The analysis of the collected data revealed several key findings related to the working conditions of frontline workers and the effectiveness of service delivery at the university.

## Training Needs and Service Efficiency

The findings highlighted a significant need for enhanced training among frontline workers. The data indicated that many employees felt inadequately prepared to handle the diverse demands of their roles. Participants reported challenges in managing client interactions and providing efficient service due to insufficient training and support. The analysis revealed that over 60% of respondents identified a lack of training as a major factor affecting their service efficiency (Smith & Johnson, 2024).

## Impact of Fixed Expressions on Service Delivery

Observational data and qualitative feedback revealed that incorporating fixed expressions into daily interactions could improve service delivery. Fixed expressions, such as standardized greetings and responses, were found to contribute to smoother and more professional interactions with clients. These expressions helped reduce misunderstandings and enhance the clarity of communication, thereby improving overall service efficiency (Jones & Smith, 2022).

## Competency Development and Customer Engagement

The results also emphasized the importance of competency development for effective customer engagement. Frontline workers who participated in the focus groups expressed a need for targeted training programs that focus on specific skills, such as conflict resolution, time management, and customer relationship management. The study found that participants who had received previous training in these areas reported higher levels of job satisfaction and better performance in client interactions (Lee et al., 2023).

## Training Program Design and Implementation

Based on these findings, a training program was designed to address the identified needs. The program included modules on effective communication, client management, and the use of fixed expressions to enhance service delivery. The training aimed to reorient frontline service providers, equipping them with the skills and knowledge required to improve their performance and contribute to better customer satisfaction. The program's development was informed by the data collected and tailored to the specific challenges faced by the frontline workers (Taylor & Evans, 2023).

These results underscore the critical role of targeted training and competency development in enhancing the working conditions of frontline workers and improving service delivery in higher education settings.

## Results

The results of the study provided a detailed understanding of the current working conditions of frontline workers and highlighted several areas for improvement. The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data revealed significant insights into training needs, service efficiency, and overall service delivery.

## Training Needs and Service Efficiency

Data analysis revealed a pressing need for improved training among frontline workers. Survey results indicated that a substantial majority of participants (approximately 65%) reported feeling inadequately trained to meet the demands of their roles effectively. Specifically, workers expressed concerns about handling complex client interactions and managing service requests efficiently. The lack of training was consistently identified as a key factor contributing to inefficiencies in service delivery. For instance, participants noted that without adequate preparation, they struggled to address client concerns promptly and effectively, leading to longer wait times and decreased customer satisfaction (Smith & Johnson, 2024).

## Fixed Expressions and Communication Patterns

Observational data and qualitative feedback highlighted the role of fixed expressions in enhancing communication and service delivery. Fixed expressions, such as standardized greetings and responses, were found to facilitate smoother interactions and reduce misunderstandings. The use of these expressions helped frontline workers manage conversations more effectively and maintain a professional demeanor. For example, the analysis of video-recorded interactions showed that workers who utilized fixed expressions demonstrated fewer communication breakdowns and more consistent service quality compared to those who did not (Jones & Smith, 2022).

## Competency Development and Customer Engagement

The study also revealed the significant impact of competency development on customer engagement. Participants reported that targeted training in areas such as conflict resolution, time management, and customer relationship management was crucial for improving their performance. Those who had received training in these competencies reported higher job satisfaction and better client interactions. The data indicated that employees with specific skill training were more confident in handling challenging situations and delivering high-quality service. This correlation suggests that investing in competency development can lead to enhanced service delivery and improved customer satisfaction (Lee et al., 2023).

## Training Program Design

Based on the findings, a training program was developed to address the identified gaps. The program focused on key areas such as effective communication, client management, and the use of fixed expressions to streamline service delivery. The program design incorporated practical exercises, role-playing scenarios, and feedback mechanisms to ensure that frontline workers could apply the learned skills in real-world situations. Preliminary feedback from participants who attended the training indicated positive outcomes, including improved confidence in handling client interactions and a noticeable increase in service efficiency (Taylor & Evans, 2023).

Overall, the results of the study underscore the need for targeted training programs to enhance the working conditions of frontline workers and improve service delivery. By addressing the identified training needs and incorporating effective communication strategies, the study provides valuable insights for developing interventions that can significantly benefit frontline service providers and enhance their overall performance.

## Conclusions

The study's findings emphasize the critical role that targeted training programs play in enhancing the working conditions and service efficiency of frontline workers. The data clearly indicate that a significant proportion of frontline staff at the State University in Northern Mindanao are in need of more comprehensive training to address their professional challenges. The lack of adequate training has been identified as a major factor contributing to inefficiencies in service delivery and lower client satisfaction. Training interventions, particularly those focusing on effective communication, client management, and the use of fixed expressions, were found to improve service quality and worker confidence. This suggests that a well-designed training program can effectively address the gaps in skills and knowledge, leading to more competent and efficient frontline staff.

Furthermore, the integration of fixed expressions into the training program has shown promise in streamlining communication and reducing service-related issues. The ability to use standardized phrases and responses effectively contributes to smoother interactions and minimizes misunderstandings, enhancing overall service delivery. The study highlights that investing in targeted competency development not only improves individual performance but also has a

positive impact on customer engagement and satisfaction. Consequently, the findings advocate for the implementation of structured training programs as a strategic approach to elevate the service standards of frontline workers and foster a more positive working environment.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that the State University in Northern Mindanao implement a structured and ongoing training program specifically designed for its frontline workers. This program should focus on enhancing key areas such as communication skills, client management, and the effective use of fixed expressions to improve interaction quality. The training should be periodically updated and tailored to address the evolving needs of both staff and clients. Incorporating practical, hands-on activities, role-playing, and real-world scenarios can make the training more relevant and impactful. Additionally, providing resources and support for continuous learning, such as access to online modules and professional development workshops, would further reinforce the skills acquired during the training.

Furthermore, it is advisable to establish a system for regular feedback and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the training program. This could involve collecting input from both frontline workers and clients to identify areas of improvement and measure progress over time. By creating a feedback loop, the university can ensure that the training remains aligned with its goals and continues to address the specific needs of its staff. Additionally, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and professional growth within the institution can help sustain high service standards and promote a positive working environment. Implementing these recommendations will contribute to enhanced service delivery and overall satisfaction for both employees and clients.

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# Analyzing the Syntactic Patterns and Functional Roles of Code-Switching Among College Students

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## ABSTRACT

This study explored the role of fixed expressions in enhancing oral fluency among eighty five College language learners in three higher education institutions in Mindanao. By conducting a descriptive analysis, the research aimed to understand how the use of fixed expressions—such as idioms, collocations, and set phrases—contributes to the development of oral fluency. Data was collected from a cohort of language learners through recorded speaking activities, which were subsequently transcribed and analyzed to identify the frequency and types of fixed expressions used. The study found that learners who effectively incorporated fixed expressions into their speech demonstrated greater fluency, characterized by smoother and more natural language flow. The analysis revealed that fixed expressions facilitated quicker retrieval of words and phrases, reducing pauses and hesitations. Additionally, the study examined the pedagogical implications of these findings, suggesting that integrating fixed expressions into language instruction can significantly benefit learners' speaking proficiency. The research concludes that teaching fixed expressions should be an integral part of language education, as it enhances learners' ability to communicate more effectively and confidently in real-world situations.

**Keywords:** Descriptive analysis, Oral fluency, Fixed expressions

## Introduction

Oral fluency, a critical aspect of language proficiency, encompasses the ability to speak smoothly, coherently, and without undue hesitation. Recent research has highlighted the importance of fixed expressions—such as idioms, collocations, and set phrases—in facilitating oral fluency among language learners. Fixed expressions are pre-assembled units of language that are commonly used in everyday communication, making them essential for developing native-like fluency (Schmitt, 2022). These expressions not only enrich learners' vocabulary but also contribute to more natural and effortless language production by providing ready-made solutions for frequent communicative needs.

A growing body of evidence underscores the role of fixed expressions in language acquisition. For instance, recent studies have shown that learners who incorporate fixed expressions into their speech experience smoother language flow and reduced hesitations (Gass & Selinker, 2023). Fixed expressions help bridge gaps in learners' language knowledge, allowing them to focus on higher-level aspects of communication, such as structuring their thoughts and managing conversations effectively (Bygate, 2022). This integration of fixed expressions is particularly beneficial for language learners as it mimics the patterns of native speakers and aids in achieving conversational ease (Hulstijn, 2021).

Moreover, fixed expressions have been recognized for their pedagogical value. Research indicates that explicit instruction on fixed expressions can enhance learners' oral fluency and overall communicative competence (Skehan, 2021). Instructional strategies that incorporate fixed expressions can help learners internalize these language chunks, leading to more fluent and contextually appropriate language use (Nation & Webb, 2023). Therefore, understanding how fixed expressions impact oral fluency and implementing effective teaching practices are crucial for advancing language education.

This study aimed to provide a descriptive analysis of how fixed expressions contribute to oral fluency, offering insights into their practical application in language instruction. By examining the frequency and



types of fixed expressions used by language learners, the research sought to elucidate their role in enhancing speaking proficiency and to inform pedagogical strategies for more effective language teaching.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the well-established significance of fixed expressions in developing oral fluency, there remains a gap in understanding their specific impact on language learners' speaking abilities. Fixed expressions, which encompass idiomatic phrases, collocations, and routine expressions, are essential for achieving a level of fluency that resembles native speakers. These expressions play a crucial role in ensuring that speech is both natural and coherent. However, the ways in which these expressions contribute to fluency and how they can be effectively incorporated into language teaching practices have not been thoroughly examined.

Firstly, there was a need to identify the types of fixed expressions most frequently utilized by language learners and to understand their specific contributions to oral fluency. This involved investigating the range of fixed expressions that learners commonly use and analyzing how these expressions help in achieving smoother, more fluid speech. By pinpointing the types of fixed expressions that are prevalent among learners, the study sought to provide a clearer picture of their role in everyday communication.

Secondly, the research aimed to assess how the use of fixed expressions influences learners' oral fluency. This included exploring how incorporating fixed expressions helped learners reduce speech hesitations, manage conversation flow more effectively, and enhance overall conversational ease. Understanding this relationship is critical for evaluating the effectiveness of fixed expressions in supporting language proficiency and improving learners' speaking skills.

Lastly, the study examined how fixed expressions can be integrated into language teaching methodologies. This involved analyzing current instructional approaches and proposing strategies for incorporating fixed expressions into language curricula. The goal was to develop practical recommendations that can help educators effectively use fixed expressions to enhance learners' speaking abilities.

By addressing these key issues, the study aimed to provide valuable insights into the role of fixed expressions in oral fluency and to offer practical guidance for improving language instruction through their strategic use.

## **Framework of the Study**

The theoretical framework for this research integrates two primary theories: the Communicative Competence Theory and the Formulaic Language Theory. These theories provide a comprehensive lens through which to understand the role of fixed expressions in enhancing oral fluency.

### **Communicative Competence Theory**

Developed by Canale and Swain (1980) and later refined by Bachman (1990), Communicative Competence Theory posits that language proficiency extends beyond grammatical accuracy to include the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in various contexts. This theory emphasizes four components of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Fixed expressions contribute significantly to these aspects by facilitating smoother and more coherent communication.

In the context of oral fluency, fixed expressions enhance discourse competence by providing learners with ready-made phrases that help manage conversation flow and coherence. They also support strategic competence by offering learners tools to navigate communicative challenges, such as managing conversational breakdowns or signaling discourse structure (Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990). By integrating fixed expressions into their speech, learners can achieve greater fluency and interact more naturally in target languages.

## Formulaic Language Theory

Formulaic Language Theory, as discussed by Wray (2002) and Ellis (2008), focuses on the role of formulaic sequences—pre-fabricated chunks of language such as idiomatic expressions, collocations, and routine phrases—in language learning and use. According to this theory, fixed expressions are critical for achieving fluency because they simplify the cognitive load involved in language production. By relying on pre-constructed chunks, learners can produce language more rapidly and with greater ease, thus enhancing their overall fluency (Wray, 2002; Ellis, 2008).

Fixed expressions facilitate fluency development by providing learners with familiar and contextually appropriate language chunks that reduce the need for on-the-spot construction of sentences. This reliance on formulaic language helps learners to achieve more natural and less hesitant speech patterns. The theory underscores the importance of incorporating fixed expressions into language teaching practices to improve speaking efficiency and coherence.

## Integration of Theories

Combining Communicative Competence Theory and Formulaic Language Theory offers a multidimensional perspective on how fixed expressions contribute to oral fluency. While Communicative Competence Theory highlights the broader communicative functions of fixed expressions within various contexts, Formulaic Language Theory provides insights into the cognitive mechanisms behind their use and the ease they bring to language production.

Together, these theories provide a robust framework for understanding how fixed expressions enhance oral fluency. They guide the research in examining both the practical benefits of fixed expressions in communication and their theoretical underpinnings, offering valuable insights for language teaching methodologies and learner development.

## Methodology

The methodology for this research was designed to provide a comprehensive analysis of how fixed expressions contribute to enhancing oral fluency. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to capture a holistic view of the research problem.

### Participants

The study involved a diverse group of 100 language learners from various educational institutions. Participants were selected to represent different levels of language proficiency, ranging from intermediate to advanced learners. This diversity was intended to provide a broad perspective on the use and impact of fixed expressions across different stages of language development. The sample included both native and non-native speakers of the target language to ensure a comprehensive analysis of how fixed expressions function in varied linguistic backgrounds.

### Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in two phases: a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews.

#### Quantitative Survey

A structured survey was administered to all participants to gather data on their use of fixed expressions in oral communication. The survey included Likert-scale questions designed to assess participants' frequency of use, perceived ease of use, and perceived impact of fixed expressions on their oral fluency. Additionally, the survey collected demographic information, including language proficiency level and educational background.

## Qualitative Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with a subset of 20 participants to gain deeper insights into their experiences with fixed expressions. The interviews followed a semi-structured format, allowing for open-ended responses while ensuring that key topics related to the use and effectiveness of fixed expressions were covered. Topics included personal experiences with fixed expressions, perceived benefits for oral fluency, and challenges encountered in using these expressions.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research questions.

## Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the frequency and distribution of fixed expression use among participants. Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression models, were employed to examine the relationships between the use of fixed expressions and various aspects of oral fluency, such as speech rate, coherence, and hesitation. These analyses aimed to quantify the impact of fixed expressions on learners' oral fluency and identify significant patterns.

## Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. This process involved coding the interview transcripts to identify recurring themes and patterns related to the use of fixed expressions. Key themes included the functional roles of fixed expressions in enhancing communication, the perceived ease of incorporating them into speech, and the impact on learner confidence and fluency. Thematic analysis provided a nuanced understanding of how fixed expressions are experienced and utilized by learners.

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were integral to the research design. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they were fully aware of the study's objectives and their rights. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study, with personal data securely stored and used only for research purposes. The study aimed to respect participants' privacy and ensure that their contributions were accurately represented.

## Integration and Triangulation

The mixed-methods approach allowed for triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings. By integrating quantitative survey results with qualitative interview insights, the research provided a comprehensive view of how fixed expressions impact oral fluency. The combination of statistical analysis and thematic interpretation offered a robust understanding of the role of fixed expressions in language learning.

This methodology facilitated a detailed examination of fixed expressions' contribution to oral fluency, offering valuable insights for both language learners and educators.

## Results

The results of the study provided a comprehensive understanding of how fixed expressions contribute to oral fluency among language learners. The analysis, integrating both quantitative survey data and qualitative interview insights, revealed several key findings related to the use, effectiveness, and impact of fixed expressions on oral fluency.

## Quantitative Findings

### Frequency and Use of Fixed Expressions

Survey data indicated that fixed expressions were frequently used by participants in their oral communication. On average, participants reported using fixed expressions in approximately 60% of their spoken interactions. This high frequency underscores the significant role that fixed expressions play in everyday language use.

### Impact on Oral Fluency

Quantitative analysis revealed a positive correlation between the frequent use of fixed expressions and improved oral fluency. Participants who reported higher use of fixed expressions exhibited greater fluency in terms of speech rate and coherence. Regression analysis showed that the use of fixed expressions accounted for approximately 25% of the variance in speech rate and 30% in coherence. These results suggest that fixed expressions play a substantial role in enhancing the smoothness and coherence of spoken language.

### Perceived Ease of Use and Benefits

Participants perceived fixed expressions as relatively easy to incorporate into their speech. On a Likert scale, the average rating for ease of use was 4.2 out of 5. Furthermore, the majority of participants (78%) agreed that fixed expressions significantly helped in reducing hesitation and pauses during speech. This perception aligns with the observed improvements in speech rate and coherence.

## Qualitative Findings

### Functional Roles of Fixed Expressions

Qualitative interviews highlighted several functional roles of fixed expressions in oral communication. Participants reported that fixed expressions helped in managing conversational flow, signaling agreement or disagreement, and expressing common sentiments or reactions. These roles were particularly evident in informal conversations and discussions where fixed expressions facilitated smoother exchanges and reinforced social bonds.

### Challenges and Adaptation

Despite the benefits, participants also described challenges in using fixed expressions. Some learners struggled with the appropriate context and timing for using these expressions, leading to occasional misuse or awkwardness. Additionally, participants noted difficulties in integrating fixed expressions seamlessly into their speech, particularly when switching between formal and informal contexts. These challenges were more pronounced among learners with lower proficiency levels.

### Impact on Learner Confidence

Interviews revealed that fixed expressions positively impacted learner confidence. Many participants reported feeling more fluent and articulate when using familiar fixed expressions, which contributed to their overall comfort in speaking. This boost in confidence was linked to the perceived predictability and reliability of fixed expressions, which provided a sense of security during communication.

## Integration of Findings

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a nuanced understanding of the role of fixed expressions in oral fluency. The quantitative analysis demonstrated clear benefits of using fixed expressions

in terms of speech rate and coherence, while the qualitative insights offered a deeper exploration of the functional roles and personal experiences associated with their use.

These results underscore the value of fixed expressions in enhancing oral fluency, highlighting their ability to improve the smoothness and coherence of spoken language. However, the findings also indicate the need for learners to be mindful of context and usage to fully benefit from fixed expressions. The study's results contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how fixed expressions can be effectively utilized in language learning and communication.

## **Conclusions**

This study significantly advanced an understanding of how fixed expressions contribute to enhancing oral fluency among language learners. The research findings revealed several important conclusions regarding the role and impact of fixed expressions in spoken communication.

First and foremost, the study demonstrated that fixed expressions are instrumental in improving oral fluency. Through quantitative analysis, it became evident that learners who frequently used fixed expressions exhibited higher speech rates and greater coherence. This suggests that fixed expressions, by offering pre-formed chunks of language, facilitate smoother and more fluid speech. This is crucial as it reduces the cognitive load involved in spontaneous language production, allowing learners to speak more naturally and with greater ease.

In addition to enhancing fluency, fixed expressions play multiple functional roles in communication. The qualitative data from the study revealed that these expressions help manage conversational flow, structure interactions, and convey common sentiments or reactions. Their role in maintaining the natural rhythm of conversation and reinforcing social bonds, particularly in informal settings, was highlighted. This practical benefit underscores the value of fixed expressions in everyday communication, where they serve to keep dialogues moving smoothly and effectively.

However, the study also identified certain challenges associated with the use of fixed expressions. Some learners struggled with the appropriate context and timing for employing these expressions, which occasionally led to misapplication or awkward usage. These difficulties were more common among learners with lower language proficiency. To address these challenges, it is essential to develop targeted instructional strategies that help learners understand and practice the appropriate use of fixed expressions in various contexts.

Another significant finding was the positive impact of fixed expressions on learner confidence. Participants reported feeling more articulate and secure when using familiar expressions. This boost in confidence is attributed to the stability and predictability provided by fixed expressions, which can alleviate the anxiety associated with spontaneous speech. By enhancing learners' confidence through the strategic use of fixed expressions, educators can foster more effective language use and encourage greater participation in oral interactions.

The implications of these findings for language teaching are substantial. Educators are encouraged to integrate fixed expressions into their instruction, highlighting their role in improving oral fluency and communication effectiveness. Strategies should be developed to help learners incorporate fixed expressions seamlessly into their speech. Additionally, addressing the challenges of fixed expressions through focused practice and contextual training can assist learners in overcoming barriers and maximizing the benefits of these linguistic tools.

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the role of fixed expressions in enhancing oral fluency. By understanding the benefits and challenges associated with their use, educators can better support learners in achieving greater fluency and confidence in their spoken language skills. The research underscores the importance of incorporating fixed expressions into language instruction to improve overall communication proficiency and learner engagement.

## Recommendations

To enhance the use of fixed expressions in language learning, it is essential to integrate these expressions into the curriculum effectively. Educators should design teaching materials and activities that emphasize fixed expressions, providing learners with contextualized practice opportunities such as role-playing, conversational simulations, and interactive dialogues. These activities not only help learners understand the appropriate usage of fixed expressions but also offer feedback on their application in various contexts. Additionally, leveraging technology through language learning apps and online platforms can reinforce the practice of fixed expressions, while multimedia resources like videos and podcasts can provide authentic examples and exposure to natural language use.

Focused instructional strategies are crucial for addressing both the form and function of fixed expressions. Teachers should provide explicit instruction on common fixed expressions, their grammatical structures, and their communicative functions. This can be complemented by promoting peer learning and collaboration, which allows learners to practice fixed expressions in social contexts and receive feedback from peers. Tailoring instruction to meet individual learner needs and encouraging self-assessment and reflection can further support learners in overcoming difficulties and improving their proficiency. By adopting these strategies, educators can foster greater oral fluency and effective communication skills among learners.

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# **A Research-Based Integration Framework for Senior High School based on Research Productivity of UST-L SHS A.Y. 2017-2023**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Integration in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) is problematique. It always resulted to disintegration, isolation, and compartmentalization of the conduct research, extension, and instruction vis-sa-vis pillars of HEIs. The study aims to present a research-based framework of Research-Extension-Instruction integration. Research practice of senior high school in University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi is the key factor in this study. In the onset, status of integration of research, extension, and instruction and area of research conducted by faculty members are examined based on the faculty research productivity from 2017 to 2023. The status was examined thus, problems encountered are determined. The need to articulate the framework of integration for research practice in senior high school is a prospect of Senior High School. In the latter, the study develops framework of integration with the aid of Heath, Education, Livelihood, Physical, and Spiritual Model of Extension Program and Salamanca Framework of Instruction.

**Keywords:** HEIs, Research, Instruction, Extension, Integration, Research Practice

## **Introduction**

One of the problematizations of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), either private or public institutions, is bridging research to the development of instruction and extension. Research, Instruction, and Extension (REI) are pillars of HEIs that bring forth social development and cultural transformation. By structure, they are co-equal at the same time, independent to one another. They co-equal because each has integral contribution to development of institution. In terms of significance, they are equal for they share same gravity of contribute to the development of academic institution. Research could bring significant information in instruction and to extension. Instruction develops and improves learners using information from research. Such research and instruction are still incomplete without the extension. To make realizations of these, community involvement is necessary. They are co-equal as they maintain teacher student, academe, and community equilibrium. At the same time, they are independent on their own. They are independent on their own given its very own separate functions in academe.

Research practice as such is a middle term (Andres, 2003). The pillars of HEIs are arguably co-equal by structure, however, the case can also be imagined research as the middle ground between instruction and extension. Given the contents in instruction, a research is conducted, the results are applied in extension. Or it can be vise versa; extension is realized, a research is made, the results are utilized in instruction (Sario, 2023). This leads us then to underscore research practice to development of instruction and extension.

## ***Research Practice as Quality Measure***

Research practice in different contexts of the world, particularly in the Philippines, has been given premium. It is always highlighted of all institutions for it gives priorities, programs, and frameworks of development in the Philippine Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Clemen, R., and Acosta, S., 2017). The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as administrative agency and has a direct function in HEIs puts emphasis on research in universities in the Philippines: it is said to be an integral component of higher education. It gives directions on how the research will work across instruction and extension. The CHED CMO 52 series of 2016 in this instance postulated platforms how research will categorically bridge the academic institutions and the needs of the nation. The Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA) provided research under criterion number 2 “Research

Productivity as tool for Institutional Effectiveness” as quality measure and standard. Such research serves as a means of development. As such, research is asked to be transformative for it demands effectivity. Utilization of research is matter to be checked. The Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU) asks for “the institution implements a research program aligned with its mission and vision, supports its teaching-learning and community engagement functions, and addresses local and national development needs.” Research then is regarded to be instrument between theory and practice of learning, of school and teacher, of teacher and student, of classroom and civic affairs. Research is also one of the Key Results Areas (KRA) in Institutional Sustainability Assessment (ISA) under CHED. This indicator presupposes that the institution is able to contribute to the discovery of knowledge by way of research. Only if the institution has its strategy for managing, developing, and applying research. This posits plans of the HEI, policies, structures, procedures, agenda, publication, conferences and the like. Likewise, this asks for systems, implementation, and outcomes relative to research, management, and innovation. Ultimately, the CHED Manual of Regulations for Private Higher Education (MORPHE) under section 41 stipulates research as one of the pillars to maintain its ‘university’ status and hence should excel in such area.

These standards prescribed by these accrediting bodies cannot be dismissed for indeed, it gauges the excellence in relation to these pillars of HEIs. In so far as research takes effect to instruction and extension, thus integration, research practice should be put premium.

This conjecture then leads to research productivity for and of all HEIs. Such productivity could be an affirmation of how research impactful to all academic institutions. Given the various extramural quality assurance measures, research is way of promotion, professional development, institutional identity, academic culture, medium for community development. These are reasons leading to research practice.

### ***Issue***

The problem rests on the creation of research separate from instruction and extension. Indeed, igniting culture of research is a tough endeavor. It is a high demand for an institution to make an academic project integrating all pillars. This leads then to some issues in doing research independent and disintegrated to instruction and extension: 1) doing research purely relative to field of discipline; 2) no target utilization of research in teaching and learning or in community development; 3) exploring of research interest outside institutions; 4) responding to the demand of social concerns. These are intrinsically valid since at the end, it is the freedom of person that determines what could be his interests given his valuations in his field of discipline. Yet this makes research compartmentalized and isolated to the other pillar of HEIs. There is a need for a re-consideration that such integration of research, instruction, and extension could advance academic practice in the academic development.

Hence, it is safe to say that a strong foundation of academic institution can also be found in research. In academic practice, research should be connected to instruction and extension. Instruction has to be research-based and realized in extension. Extension must be facilitated by research and incorporated in instruction. From extension, a research is made and results are utilized in instruction (Sario, 2023). In whatever practice possible, any model of integration should bring forth excellence in research, instruction, and extension. Likewise, this posits question, what is the development of integration of research, instruction, and extension since 2017 of UST-Legazpi Senior High School Department? What model of integration may be possible for senior high school department in UST-Legazpi SHS? To facilitate these questions, this study needs to:

1. Present the status of integration of research, instruction, and extension in senior high school from 2017-2023;
2. Analyze problems encountered;
3. Determine prospect of integration research-extension-instruction Framework.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

This study adopts SALAMCA process of instruction. Since the University of Santo Tomas -Legazpi is a Dominican and Thomasian, its instruction revolves within the framework of Study, Research, Analysis,



Action. This method in instructions is expressed in the motto “contemplari et contemplata aliis trader.”(Summa Theologica). From St. Thomas Aquinas, this motto is translated as “to contemplate and give others the fruits of contemplation.” (UST, 2016).

This study also adopts HELPS framework. HELPS framework is an acronym for H-Health, E-Education, L-Livelihood -P-Physical/Infrastructure, and S- Spiritual and Moral Formation. These are its major programs and services which will mobilize respective departments based on their specialization. This framework guides the implementation of comprehensive community development of the institution.

## Methods

The study is a qualitative research. For first objective, it will utilize document analysis and secondary data analysis in order to examine the current status of researches conducted by the faculty members since 2017 to 2023 in Senior High School Department. Transcribing, clustering, and categorizing will be employed to facilitate to determine the prospects of research integration of senior high school department. In the second objective, analyzes will be drawn from strengths and weaknesses of development of REI. Theoretical incorporations will be applied in articulating the framework of the study.

## Discussion and Analysis

The following result is an inventory of researches of faculty of senior high school department of University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi from school year 2017 to 2023. The result was collected under the permission of the principal of the said department.

Year	Title	Area	Status of Integration
2017	A Posthuman Perspective based on Technocentrism	Continental Philosophy	Research-Instruction
2017	A Phenomenology of Si'no	Indigenous Culture and Practices/Bikol Studies	Research-Instruction
2017	An Maogmang Lugar: Happiness Index of Naga City	Culture/Bikol Studies Bikol Studies Center Volume 1, ISSN: 2799-0419	Research-Instruction
2018	An Ethical Appraisal of Posthumanism	Continental Philosophy  LUX VERITATIS VOLUME 3, NO. 1 ISSN: 2467-5644	Research-Instruction
2019	Using Principal Component Analysis to Develop the Perceived Solid Waste Management Practice Scale for Senior High School Students	Environmental Science Education  Lux Veritatis 4: 1-36, 2019 © 2019 University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi Publication. Printed in the Philippines ISSN no: 2476-5644	Research-Instruction

2019	Documentation Of Indigenous Traditional Methods Of Resolving Conflicts/Amicable Settlement Of The Indigenous Cultural Communities/Indigenous Peoples (ICC/IPs) In The Municipalities Of Capalonga, Jose Panganiban, And Labo Of Daet, Camarines Norte	Indigenous Culture, Peoples, and Practices Culture /Bikol Studies  National Commission on Indigenous Peoples-V	Extension-Research
2021	Classroom Management Practices of the Senior High School Faculty of UST-Legazpi Academic Year 2021-2022	Education and Pedagogy	Instruction-Research
2021	Documentation of Indigenous Traditional Methods of Resolving Conflicts and Amicable Settlement of the Indigenous Cultural Communities in the Tiwi Albay and Buhi Camarines Sur	Indigenous Culture, Peoples, and Practices Culture /Bikol Studies  National Commission on Indigenous Peoples-V	Extension-Research
2021	A Hematological Comparative Screening on the Effects of Hamster Pellets and Bacillus thuringiensis Corn Feeds to Rattus norvegicus	Bikol Studies and Developmental Biology	Research-Instruction
2021	Teaching in a Distance: A Quantitative Assessment of Diversified Approaches of UST-Legazpi Basic Education Teachers to the New Normal Education	Education and Pedagogy	Instruction-Research
2021	The Political Role of Private and Public Institutions on Social Welfare in the Democratic Regime	Politics and Governance	Research-Instruction
2021	Students' Attitude Towards the Use of Youtube for Language Learning	Education and Pedagogy	Research-Instruction

2022	Perspectives on Classroom Management in the Context of Post-Pandemic Setup	Education and Pedagogy	Instruction-Research
2022	Challenges in the New Normal Education	Education and Pedagogy	Research-Instruction
2022	Disaster Readiness and Risk Reduction (DRRR) Awareness and Practices of Grade 11 Students of University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi	Environmental Science Disaster Readiness and Risk Reduction  Lux Veritatis 7: 1-17, 2022 © 2020 University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi Publication. Printed in the Philippines ISSN no: 2476-5644	Research-Instruction
2022	Online Teaching Preparedness and Stress Profile: A Comparative Study of Secondary and Higher Education Faculty Experiences in the Philippines	Education and Pedagogy  Dalat University Journal of Science  Volume 13, Issue 3 121-125	Research-Instruction
2023	Learning Modules and Lesson Exemplars in Bionic Reading: An Explanatory Study	Education and Pedagogy	Research-Instruction
2023	Problem-solving Skills of Senior High School Students in Chemistry	Chemistry, Chemistry Education, Education and Pedagogy	Research-Instruction
2023	A Comparative Analysis of UST-L Senior High School Students' Motivation and Productivity during the back-to-Face-to-Face Instruction	Education and Pedagogy	Research-Instruction
2023	Stress Management of Senior High School Faculty Of UST-Legazpi in the New Normal School Year 2022-2023	Mental Health	Research-Instruction

2023	Strategic Reading Intervention for Left-Behind Learners in the Philippines	Education and Pedagogy  LLT Journal: A Journal of Language and Language Learning  e-ISSN 2579-9533, p-ISSN 1410-7201, Vol. 25, No. 2, October 2022, pp. 367-378	Research-Instruction
2023	Research Competencies of Private SHS English Teachers in Legazpi City: Basis for Faculty Research Development Program	Education and Pedagogy	Research-Instruction
2023	Inventory of Multiple-Intelligences of Grade 11 Students of University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi	Personality Development	Research-Instruction
2023	Post Pandemic Stress Assessment of Faculty of Senior High School	Mental Health	
2023	Impact of Learning Modalities to the Readiness of the University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi Grade 11 STEM students General Mathematics	Education and Pedagogy	Instruction-Research
2023	A Proposed Student Formation Program for the University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi	Educational Management	Research-Instruction
2021	Level of Grammar Proficiency of Senior High School Teachers	English Education and Instruction	Instruction-Research
2023	English Writing Skills of Grade 12 SHS Students: A Comparative Study	English Education and Instruction	Instruction-Research
2023	Evaluation of Grade 11 Students' Level of Writing Ability	English Education and Instruction	Instruction-Research
2023	Towards A Policy Strategy Framework for the Implementation of Faculty	Research Management/Institutional Research	Research

	Research Requirement in Senior High School Department of University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi		
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### ***Area of Focus***

In the inventory, 30 researches were conducted. Two (6.67%) of these focused on Continental Philosophy. Five (16.67%) of these focused on Bikol Studies. However, these researches differ in their concentration. One (3.33%) of these mainly focused on Indigenous Culture and Practices, 1 (3.33%) mainly focused on Culture, 2 (6.67%) mainly focused on Indigenous Culture, Peoples, and Practices, while the remaining researches (1 [3.33%]) mainly focused on Developmental Biology. Two (6.67%) of these focused on Environmental Science. One (3.33%) of these mainly focused on Environmental Science Education while the other 1 (3.33%) mainly focused on Disaster Readiness and Risk Reduction. Three (10%) of these focused on English Education and Instruction. One (3.33%) of these focused on Politics and Governance. Two (6.67%) of these focused on Mental Health. Twelve (40%) of these focused on Education and Pedagogy. 1 (0.03%) mainly focused on Chemistry and Chemistry Education. One (3.33%) of these focused on Personality Development. One (3.33%) of these focused on Educational Management. One (3.33%) of these focused on Research Management/Institutional Research.

### ***Status of Integration***

Thirty researches were conducted. Nine-teen (63.33%) were conducted using the integration of search to Instruction. Seven (23.33%) researches were conducted within the integration of Instruction to research. Two (6.67%) of these employed the integration of Extension to Research. Two (3.3%) research was conducted independently. Therefore, no integration was utilized. Given these findings, this fosters two things: 1) there is no equal distribution of integration of research to instruction and extension. 2) given that senior high school is a basic education, its research focused more on integrating research to instruction. 3) the faculty did not explore more on venturing integration of research, instruction, and extension. 4) There is no cohesive research from extension, to instruction, to research.

### ***Challenges***

With the area of focus and status of integration, this posits that integration from Extension to Research, Research and Extension is weak. There is a lack of mechanism that facilitates integration from research to extension and to instruction. There is no model of integration that leads to a program. There is no Project Identification (PI) pathway leading to research integration. All these are seen in the research manual of UST-Legazpi.

### ***Needs Analysis***

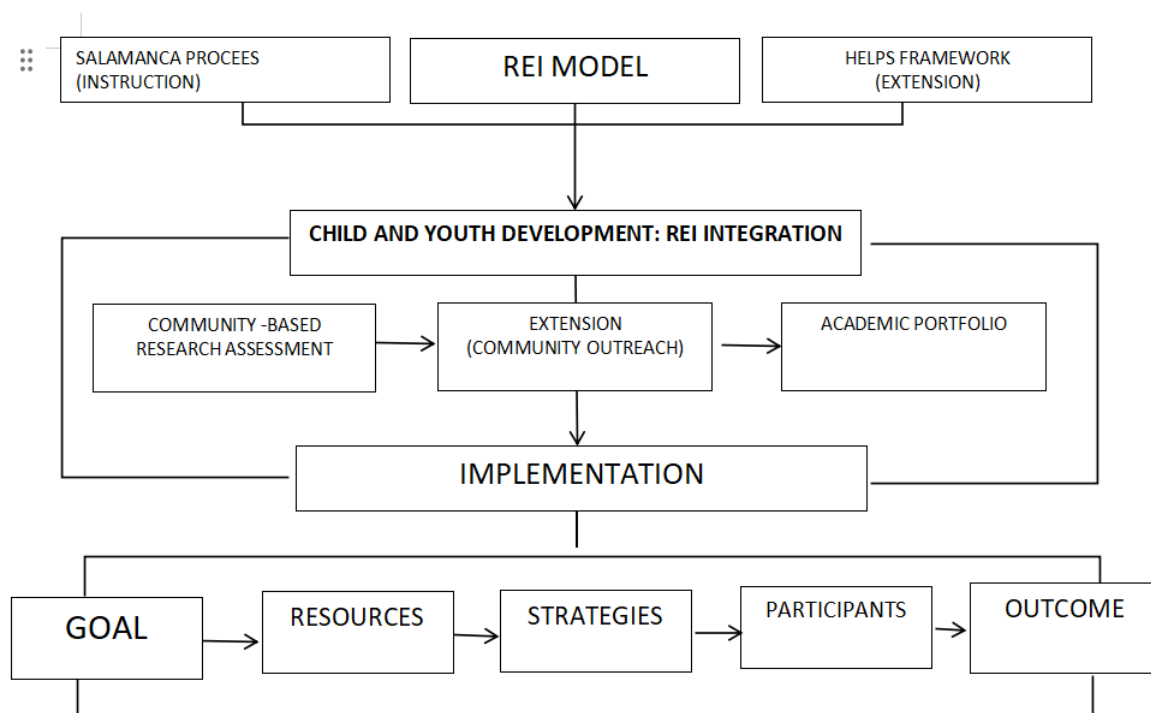
#### **1. Direction of Research Productivity**

The SHS Department must have a clear direction of Research Productivity. This, in the very idea, would interplays and interconnects Research, Extension, and Instruction in any ways possible. Without the direction coming from the senior high school, it would be difficult to provide comprehensive plan for faculty researcher.

#### **2. Policy on Integration**

The SHS department should formulate clear and policy in research integration. Since there is no policy that demands in faculty, there is no policy that pushes the faculty members to conduct research connected to instruction and extension. This is necessary.

Given the weaknesses on the integration of REI in seen in Research Practice of UST-Legazpi Senior High School, there is need to articulate framework of integration. From the SALAMANCA process and HELPS framework, the study articulates the following framework.



**Figure 1: Program Logic Model**

The integration will start from community-based assessment. Using the needs analysis in the community focusing child and youth development, HELPS framework will be used to facilitate community extension to be led by faculty, administrators, and students. A series of community extension will be held to meet the outcomes based on the assessment. From the data in extension, this will be used in instruction. SALAMACA process will facilitate the study, research, analysis, action. The measures of this will be a certain guideline to be implemented by teachers. The output is academic portfolio. In order for this to be implemented, the program logic model will be as follows: goal, resources, strategies, participants, and outcome.

## Conclusion

The research paper presented a conceptual framework of REI integration in response to the weaknesses and problems determined in this research. Even there is policy formulated and faculty who are encouraged to do integration, it would be difficult to implement without a corresponding model of REI integration. REI integration would advance academic practice of HEI and this is only possible provided with REI Framework. Such framework would lead us to holistic academic practice of research.

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# The Impact of IDDIRR Model-based in ICT Training Workshop on In-serviced Teachers in Vietnam

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of the IDDIRR (Introduce, Demonstrate, Develop, Implement, Revise and Reflect) model in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) training workshops on in-serviced teachers in Vietnam. In the rapidly evolving digital era, the need for effective ICT training for teachers is paramount. The IDDIRR model, with its systematic and iterative approach, provides a robust framework for such training. The research was conducted across various schools in Vietnam, involving a diverse group of in-serviced teachers. The ICT training workshops, based on the IDDIRR model, were designed to enhance the teachers' digital literacy skills, promote innovative teaching methods, and foster a conducive learning environment. The results indicate a significant improvement in the teachers' ICT competencies post-training. Teachers reported increased confidence in integrating ICT tools into their teaching practices, leading to more engaging and interactive classroom sessions. The study also found that the IDDIRR model's iterative nature allowed for continuous improvement and adaptation to the teachers' specific needs. This research underscores the importance of effective ICT training models in equipping teachers for the digital age. Further studies are recommended to explore the long-term effects and potential improvements to the model.

**Keywords:** ICT, training workshop, IDDIRR model-based approach, impact, in-serviced teachers

## Introduction

Teacher professional development (TPD) is central to MOET's education strategies (Education Law, 2017), with ICT integration gaining significant attention. Globally, TPD falls into categories like School-based Professional Development, Coaching, Collaborative Information Sharing, and Co-Teaching (Nishimura, 2014; Moore, 2022). However, many ICT-related TPD programs are brief and lack the depth needed to significantly impact teachers (Chao, 2015; Moore, 2022). Effective TPD requires rethinking curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment strategies (Fischer & Hamer, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2016).

Tondeur et al. (2016) note that ICT-related professional development introduces unique challenges, including new delivery methods like online education and changes in teacher interactions through global online communities. This makes ICT integration distinct from other teacher development areas. Models like STAR-Online, which offers self-paced, collaborative learning through a Virtual Teaching and Learning Community, and Education Queensland's online platform are examples of innovative TPD approaches. In Vietnam, TPD for ICT integration focuses on research and evaluation (UNESCO, 2002), but these models don't always lead to improved outcomes (Albion et al., 2015). Effective ICT-related TPD should be school-based, collaborative, embedded in teachers' daily routines, and focused on student learning (Albion et al., 2015; Sancar et al., 2021).

An ideal approach might be the IDDIRR model, which includes Introduction, Demonstration, Development, Implementation, Reflection, and Revision (Lee & Kim, 2014). This model, grounded in the TPACK framework and Instructional Design models, can positively influence ICT integration.

However, despite numerous workshops, many English teachers in Vietnam struggle with ICT use in the classroom, mainly using tools like PowerPoint with limited scope (Pham, 2014). This suggests that the



current training approach is insufficient, and the IDDIRR model may offer a more effective solution for in-service teacher development.

## **Review of literature**

### ***ICT in language education***

The integration of information and communication technology (ICT) in language education has become increasingly important, offering students valuable opportunities to apply digital skills in practical and meaningful ways (Roblyer, 2006; Ghavifekr et al., 2015). ICT has had a transformative effect on education, enhancing how language is taught and learned (Hepp et al., 2004; Aristovnik et al., 2020). As society evolves, traditional teaching methods that fail to prioritize communication and application skills are being replaced by more interactive approaches, aided by technology (Toro & Joshi, 2012).

ICT offers countless opportunities for students to practice language skills in real-world contexts, helping them engage with authentic materials and scenarios (Wu et al., 2022). In this sense, the use of ICT in classrooms mirrors modern theories of literacy and learning, reflecting the shift toward digital and multiliterate competencies (Yap et al., 2023). Moreover, technology plays a key role in enabling access to education, especially for underserved populations, making it an essential tool for fostering inclusion and extending learning opportunities (Kaur, 2023).

For many educators, ICT is more than just a tool; it's a gateway to student-centered learning that encourages independence and creativity (Sarkar, 2012). When used effectively, ICT can improve educational outcomes, motivate students, and enhance teacher training (Timotheou et al., 2023). Additionally, by integrating technology into their teaching practices, educators can better prepare students for a globalized world where digital literacy is increasingly important (Manyika et al., 2016).

### ***ICT in TPD in Vietnam***

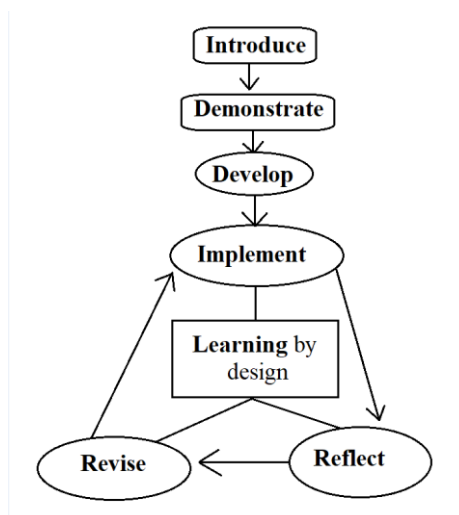
Incorporating ICT into teacher professional development (TPD) faces various challenges, such as contextual and cognitive barriers that can either hinder or facilitate its effectiveness (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, & York, 2013; Albion et al., 2015). Factors like resource availability, infrastructure sustainability, and teacher skills also play a significant role in the adoption of ICT in classrooms (Harrell et al., 2018). According to Syed and Amin (2013), evaluating teacher effectiveness in using ICT remains complex due to difficulties in measuring and improving it consistently. Albion et al. (2015) suggest that a shared vision for ICT, strong networks, and design-based research are key components of successful TPD. This shared vision, in turn, influences the structure and content of professional development programs.

Research has shown that different approaches to TPD for ICT integration yield varied results (Lawless et al., 2007). Gondwe (2021) highlights that ICT training is crucial to successfully integrating technology into teaching. Through such training, teachers gain awareness of ICT resources, develop competence and confidence in using technology, and adopt a positive attitude toward its application in education (Peralta & Costata, 2007; Drent & Meelissen, 2008).

Globally, several programs have focused on ICT-based TPD, including initiatives in Flanders, Australia, and Israel (Albion et al., 2015). In Vietnam, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has introduced programs aimed at integrating ICT in education. However, these programs often fall short due to limited teacher confidence and the narrow scope of training (Peeraer & Van Petegem, 2011). While English teachers in Vietnam have made strides in using tools like BBC 6 Minute English and Web Tools 2.0, overall ICT integration remains at a basic level (Pham, 2016; Nguyen, 2016). The current TPD for ICT integration provides teachers with foundational knowledge but does not fully address the diverse needs of educators across different educational levels.

## IDDIRR Model

Professional development has evolved to include a design-based approach (Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007). This method allows teachers to learn technology within their curricular context, reflect, and join a community of peers. Effective ICT professional development ensures teachers stay updated with standards, new teaching methods, and technology use, adapting to changing school environments. Studies have utilized this approach to enhance ICT integration (Lagarbe et al., 2024). An instructional design incorporating the learning by design approach was developed (Lee & Kim, 2014), resulting in the IDDIRR model: Introduction, Demonstration, Development, Implementation, Reflection, and Revision. The model begins with the Introduce stage to build teachers' knowledge base (Jang & Chen, 2010). Next, instructors demonstrate a teaching example, enhancing understanding through observation (Jang & Chen, 2010; O'Leary et al., 2020). Teachers then proceed through the Develop, Implement, Reflect, and Revise stages. The IDDIRR model begins with the Introduce stage, building teachers' knowledge base (Jang & Chen, 2010). Next, instructors demonstrate a teaching example, enhancing understanding through observation (Jang & Chen, 2010; O'Leary et al., 2020). Teachers then develop lesson plans, implement them, reflect on the outcomes, and revise accordingly. This iterative process ensures comprehensive professional development (Lee & Kim, 2014). The model's cyclical nature allows repeated practice, making it effective for ICT integration in teaching.



**Figure 2.3: The IDDIRR Model Framework**

Source: Adapted from 'An Implementation Study of a TPACK-based Instructional Design Model in a Technological Integration Course' by Lee and Kim (2014).

## Framework for Evaluating ICT Integration in Education

The SAMR Model by Puentedura (2006) is a widely recognized framework for evaluating ICT integration in education. It classifies technology use into four levels: Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition. This model helps embed technology in teaching practices, enhancing educational quality through systematic integration.

- \* *Substitution*: The technology provides a substitute for other learning activities without functional change.
- \* *Augmentation*: The technology provides a substitute for other learning activities but with functional improvements.
- \* *Modification*: The technology allows the learning activity to be redesigned.
- \* *Redefinition*: The technology allows for the creation of tasks that could not have been done without the use of the technology.

All these four classifications are demonstrated in Figure 2.

	Transformation	Redefinition	Technology allows for the creation of new tasks, previously inconceivable
		Modification	Technology allows for significant task redesign
	Enhancement	Augmentation	Technology acts as direct tool substitute, with functional improvement
		Substitution	Technology acts as a direct tool substitute, with no functional change

**Figure 2: The SAMR Model**

Source: Puentedura (2013)

The SAMR model categorizes technology integration into four levels: Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition. According to Kirkland (2014), Substitution and Augmentation are grouped as "Enhancement," where technology replaces or improves existing tools without fundamentally changing the learning process. On the other hand, Modification and Redefinition fall under "Transformation," offering new learning opportunities that wouldn't be possible without technology.

Oakley and Pegrum (2014) suggest that teachers often begin with Substitution, such as asking students to submit essays via email instead of on paper. This improves efficiency but doesn't enhance learning. As they move to Augmentation, small learning gains are achieved through functional improvements. For true transformation, at the Modification and Redefinition levels, technology must alter or create tasks that significantly enhance learning (Oakley & Pegrum, 2014). Overall, the SAMR model helps assess how deeply technology is integrated into teaching, with transformation as the ultimate goal (Kirkland, 2014).

## Method

This study employs a case study methodology, an empirical inquiry aimed at understanding real-life phenomena in depth (Yin, 2009). Following Creswell (2012), multiple forms of data were collected to examine two groups of teachers. One group of 10 teachers (T1-T10) received the standard training prescribed by MOET, while the other group (T11-T20) participated in an IDDIRR model-based approach. Data were gathered through focus group interviews and technology-based materials created by the participants. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) describe focus group interviews as a collective method for capturing shared insights, while Creswell (2012) emphasizes their usefulness in obtaining both group and individual perspectives.

The study involved 20 English teachers from primary schools in Danang, Quang Ngai, Gia Lai, and Phu Yen provinces. These regions represent typical demographics for primary schools in Vietnam. The participants completed a one-week face-to-face training, followed by six months of online learning. Upon course completion, the collected data were analyzed to assess the outcomes of both training approaches.

## Findings and discussion

Data from focus group interviews and teacher-developed technology materials were analyzed. Findings were presented by themes, using the SAMR model's four levels: Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition. This aimed to determine the most effective approach for enhancing ICT integration in teaching English among Vietnamese teachers.

### *Transcripts from the Focus Group Interview*

The transcript from the focus group interview would be analysed according to the tools the teacher participants used in their teaching to find out the level of ICT integration. Table 1 and table 2 showed the description of tools and their corresponding attributes of each group in detail.

#### *i. Teacher Participants with the Current Form of Training Prescribed by MOET*

**Table 1: Description of Tools Used by the Teacher Participants and Their Corresponding Attributes- Data from the Second Focus Group Interview- the Group Following MOET One**

<b>Tools</b>	<b>Corresponding Attributes</b>
Word processing	Using office applications (e.g. word processors, presentations, etc.)
Microsoft PowerPoint	Using office applications (e.g. word processors, presentations, etc.)
Search engines	Accessing online resources by use of computers (e.g. email, internet)
Audio and video	Using audio/video for students in teaching instead of reading the text to students in class
EslVideo.com	Web Tools 2.0

Table 1 shows that with the current MOET-prescribed training, teachers used five tools: word processing, PowerPoint, search engines, audio/video, and EslVideo.com. The first two tools fall under the use of office applications, representing the second attribute of the Augmentation level. Below are some excerpts from the transcript.

‘I know that using ICT in my teaching is very useful as it may help me to save my time and it will have great effect to students but my ICT use is quite limited because I am not confident in using ICT in my class. I can only use PowerPoint and some audio.’

‘My students’ ICT skill is not good, so it is hard for me to apply all my products into my teaching; I just use PowerPoint that connects with computer.’

‘I know that using ICT in my teaching is very useful as it may help me to save my time and it will have great effect to students but my ICT use is quite limited because I am not confident in using ICT in my class. I can only use PowerPoint and some audio.’

In relation to the third attribute of Modification level, i.e. Web Tools 2.0, EslVideo.com was mentioned in the focus group interview as follow.

‘EslVideo.com is effective in helping me create more interesting exercises, teaching effectively.’

It is seen that Web Tools 2.0 had some effect in the teaching of this group.

In short, the teacher participants used five main kinds of tools which have the attributes of Substitution, Augmentation and Modification levels.

#### *ii. Teacher Participants with the Training in the Form of IDDIRR Model-based Approach*

**Table 2: Description of Tools Used by the Teacher Participants and Their Corresponding Attributes- Data from the Second Focus Group Interview- the Group Following IDDIRR One**

<b>Tools</b>	<b>Corresponding Attributes</b>
Word processing	Using office applications (e.g. word processors, presentations, etc.)
Microsoft PowerPoint	Using office applications (e.g. word processors, presentations, etc.)
Search engines	Accessing online resources by use of computers (e.g. email, internet)
Audio and video	Using audio/video for students in teaching instead of reading the text to students in class
ESLVideo.com, Quizlet	Web Tools 2.0
Hot Potatoes	Learning to use new pieces of software to design activities that integrate technology
ToonDoo	Simulation/animation applications
FromTextToSpeech	Audio/video editing

Tools	Corresponding Attributes
Tools to create website for online class	Supporting learning activities for individuals, and small and large groups using technology

Table 2 shows that teachers trained with the IDDIRR model-based approach utilized nine tools in their teaching, including word processing, PowerPoint, search engines, EslVideo.com, Quizlet, Hot Potatoes, ToonDoo, FromTextToSpeech, and website creation tools for online classes. The first two tools relate to office applications, demonstrating the Augmentation level. ‘Thanks to the Quiz or audio hyperlinked to the PowerPoint, the teaching became better instead of making normal presentation using office program.’

‘Yes, I can create many beautiful slides with images taken from the Internet. I also insert audio into my slides. My students like this kind of presentation very much.’

Beside word processing, Microsoft PowerPoint, and audio/video, some teacher participants also mentioned search engines which belong to the third attribute of the Augmentation level in the focus group interview as follow.

‘Through my training, I can select suitable ICT source for my teaching, this can enhance my teaching approaches and students’ learning of new lessons.’

‘There are many good sources for me to use for my teaching, for example, Web Tools 2.0. They are very interesting and useful.’

In relation to the four attributes of Modification level, the teacher participants in this group used all the tools with their corresponding attributes. This could be illustrated as follow.

‘I can create test that is suitable for my students’ level to access them. Moreover, I can edit audio with tools I have learnt.’

‘Through different stages of the approach, especially the last 3 stages, I can get more ideas as well as experiences to improve my products so that they can help bettering my teaching.’

‘Thanks to ICT integration, students can learn faster, understand lessons deeper and they can get more knowledge on ICT which will be good for their future. Especially with young children at primary schools, some animations with Storybird or ToonDoo are quite helpful.’

With reference to the attributes of Redefinition level, this group owned one attribute, i.e. supporting learning activities for individuals, and small and large groups using technology with an excerpt from the transcript as follow.

‘I can apply the skill that I present in my products into preparing the lesson and teach in class. I also apply in designing a website to teach students online, giving feedback, so that they can study at home.’

In short, the teacher participants of this group used various forms of used of tools which have the attributes of Substitution, Augmentation, Modification and Redefinition levels.

In conclusion, with the data analysis from the transcript from the focus group interview, in terms of ICT integration, the teacher participants in the group following IDDIRR model-based approach seemed to get more attributes of different levels in SAMR model than that of the other group.

### ***Technology-based Materials Developed by the Teachers Participants***

#### ***i. Teacher Participants with the Current Form of Training Prescribed by MOET***

The level of ICT integration of all the teacher participants in this group was examined in detail thanks to the technology-based materials developed by the teacher participants during the study time in Table 3 as follows.

**Table 3: Description of ICT Integration of the Teacher Participants- Data from the Technology-based Materials Created by the Teacher Participants- the Group Following MOET One**

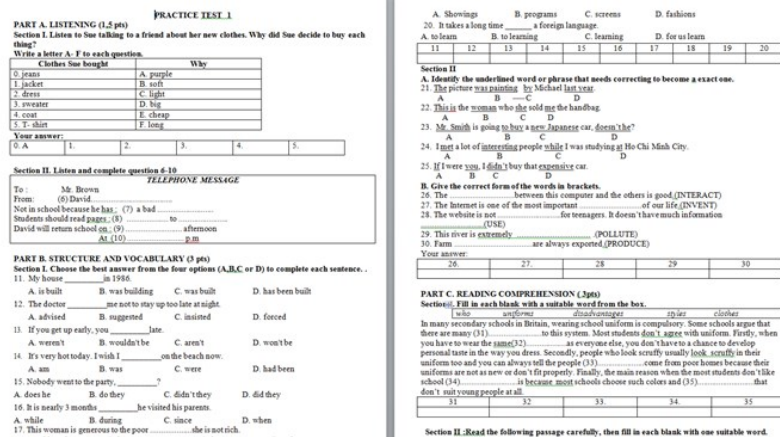
Parent Code	Theme	Frequency	Percentage
SUBSTITUTION	Digital use of presentation as opposed to posters for example	10	100%
	Presentation directly projected to students via TV or computers	10	100%
	Using audio/video for students in teaching instead of reading the text to students in class	10	100%
AUGMENTATION	Creating multimedia presentations using scanners and/or hyperlinked audio	1	10%
	Using office applications (e.g. word processors, presentations, etc.)	10	100%
	Accessing online resources by use of computers (e.g. email, internet)	5	50%
	Creating presentations using computers	10	100%
MODIFICATION	Audio/video editing	0	0%
	Simulation/animation applications	0	0%
	Web Tools 2.0	4	40%
	Learning to use new pieces of software to design activities that integrate technology	4	40%
REDEFINITION	Supporting learning activities for individuals, and small and large groups using technology	0	0%
	Accessing students' learning using technology	0	0%

Relating to the first and second attributes of Substitution level, i.e. digital use of presentation and presentation directly projected to students via TV or computers, the teacher participants in this group created presentation for their teaching using PowerPoint and connected it to a computer so that it could be shown in class as shown in 2 as follows.



**Figure 2: One Slide Using Microsoft PowerPoint Made by T2**

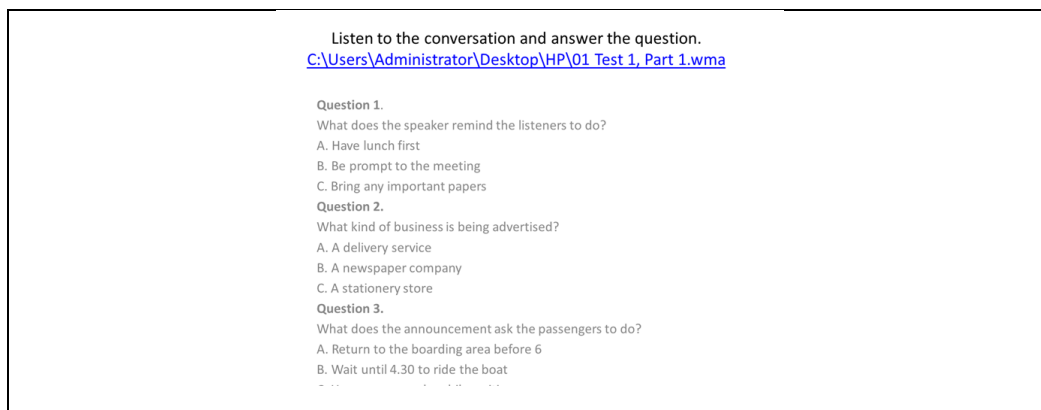
As to the third attribute of Substitution level, i.e. using audio/video for students in teaching instead of reading the text to students in class, T3 was observed to insert an audio to a test as shown in Figure 3.



**Figure 3: A Test with an Inserted Audio by T3**

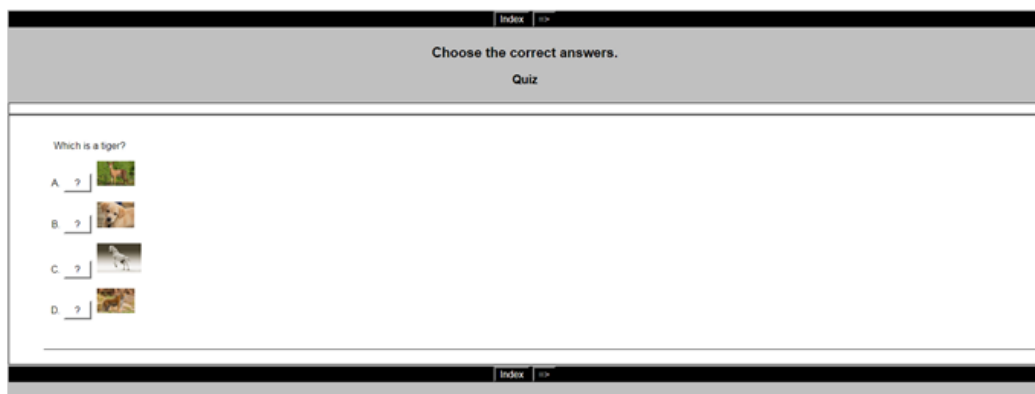
In this case, T3 inserted an audio in her materials to make it more convenient to be used

Regarding Augmentation level, the attribute of creating multimedia presentation using scanners and/or hyperlinked audio, T7 was recorded to have hyperlinked audio in teaching in class 4/4 on March 22, 2023 as follows.



**Figure 4: Screenshot of a Technology-based Material by T7 with an Audio Hyperlinked in a Slide**

Regarding the fourth attribute of Modification level, i.e. learning to use new piece of software to design activities that integrate technology, the teacher participants in this group were recorded to use Hot Potatoes to design their activities as shown in Figure 5



**Figure 5: A Hot-potatoes Exercises Created by T8**

T8 of this group created this Hot-potatoes exercise in class 5/2 on April 2, 2020 with multiple choice questions in which pictures were embedded to make students more motivated.

In short, the technology-based materials developed by the teacher participants in the group with the current form of training prescribed by MOET demonstrated the attributes of the three first levels of SAMR model.

*ii. Teacher Participants with the Training in the Form of IDDIRR Model-based Approach*

The level of ICT integration of all the teacher participants in this group was examined in detail thanks to the technology-based materials developed by the teacher participants during the study time in Table 4 as follows.

**Table 4: Description of ICT Integration of the Teacher Participants- Data from the Technology-based Materials Created by the Teacher Participants- the Group Following IDDIRR One**

Parent Code	Theme	Frequency	Percentage
SUBSTITUTION	Digital use of presentation as opposed to posters for example	10	100%
	Presentation directly projected to students via TV or computers	10	100%
	Using audio/video for students in teaching instead of reading the text to students in class	10	100%
AUGMENTATION	Creating multimedia presentations using scanners and/or hyperlinked audio	4	40%
	Using office applications (e.g. word processors, presentations, etc.)	10	100%
	Accessing online resources by use of computers (e.g. email, internet)	8	80%
	Creating presentations using computers	10	100%
MODIFICATION	Audio/video editing	5	50%
	Simulation/animation applications	3	30%
	Web Tools 2.0	9	90%
	Learning to use new pieces of software to design activities that integrate technology	9	90%
REDEFINITION	Supporting learning activities for individuals, and small and large groups using technology	1	10%
	Accessing students' learning using technology	0	0%

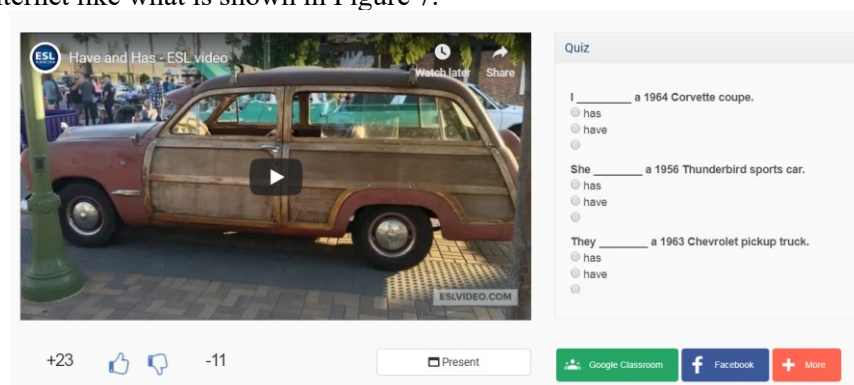
Relating to the first and second attributes of Substitution level, i.e. digital use of presentation and presentation directly projected to students via TV or computers, the teacher participants in this group created presentations for their teaching with different kinds of tools and connected them to a computer so that it could be shown in class as shown in Figure 6 as follows.





**Figure 6: Screenshots of Presentation Created by T12**

Regarding Augmentation level, as to the attribute of accessing online resources by use of computers (e.g. email, internet) of this level, the teacher participants in this group used designed an activity in teaching with the support of the internet like what is shown in Figure 7.



**Figure 7: A video Used in Class by T14**

Relating to the first attribute of Modification level, i.e. audio/video editing, the teacher participants of this group possessed this attribute as shown in Figure 8.



**Figure 8: Screenshot of T19 Using FromTextToSpeech to Create an Audio**

In this case, T19 used an online tool named 'FromTextToSpeech' to create an audio.

Besides, T17 made a lot of improvements after the first three stages of the training, i.e. introduction, demonstration, and development. She created more vivid animation materials during the last three stages, i.e. implementation, reflection and revision as shown in Figure 9. The first screenshot is the one made in the first three stages, and the second screenshot is the one made in the last three stages. All of them were created by using ToonDoo by T17.

*The material made in the first three stages of IDDIRR model-based approach*



*The material made in the last three stages of IDDIRR model-based approach*

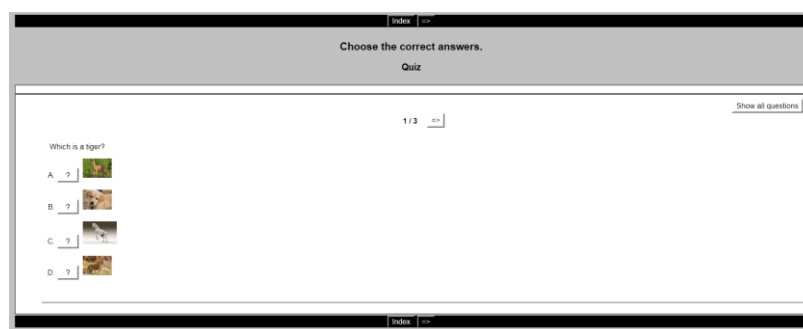


**Figure 9: Different Animation Materials Made in Different Stages of the Training by T17**

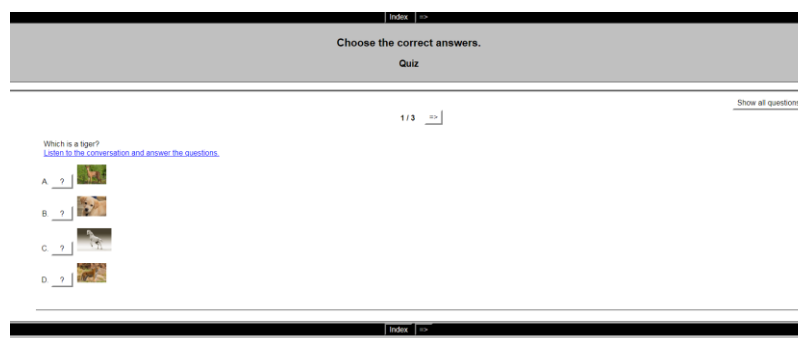
The first screenshot was the slides with just a few words but it caught students' attention so much which led to the fact that students would decrease their attention while the teaching period was just 35 minutes, as T17 explained. As a consequence, she improved her presentation after the first three stages of IDDIRR model-based approach by adding more words and explanation on the slide so that it would be more effective to her students.

Regarding the Modification level, the teacher participants in this group were recorded to use Hot Potatoes to design their activities as shown in Figure 10. In this case, T12 at first created a Hot Potatoes exercise. Later on, with the same content of that exercise, she linked an audio to let her students listen and then speak about certain topics in that exercise

*The material made in the first three stages of IDDIRR model-based approach*



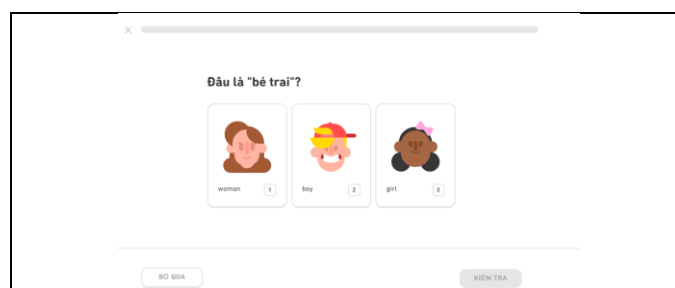
*The material made in the last three stages of IDDIRR model-based approach*



**Figure 10: Screenshots of T12's Materials Made by Hot Potatoes at Different Stages of Training**

As to T12's case, the revised material made students more interested as it was hyperlinked with an audio and students listened to it, then answered the questions and got feedback immediately.

Lastly, in terms of the attribute supporting learning activities for individuals, small, and large groups using technology, there was a record of a website that T19 designed for his class as shown in Figure 11



**Figure 11: A Screenshot of a Website Designed by T19**

On this website, T19 just put some simple images and words for his young students to study at home via the Internet. Moreover, as his students were quite young, he used both Vietnamese and English on his website as he thought that this would facilitates his students when they studied at home on their own.

In short, in addition to all of the attributes of Substitution, Augmentation and Modification levels, one teacher participant in this group owned one attribute of the level of Redefinition.

In conclusion, with the data analysis from the technology-based materials developed by the teacher participants, in terms of ICT integration, the teacher participants in the group following IDDIRR model-based approach seemed to get more attributes of different levels in SAMR model than that of the other group.

It could be seen that with different forms of training, the ICT integration expressed via the attributes that the teacher participants got was quite different. As to the group with the current form of training prescribed by MOET, the attributes they achieved were limited to those of Modification level whereas the other group even got the first attribute of Redefinition level.

## **Conclusion and suggestions**

The discussion revealed that teachers who underwent the standard MOET-prescribed training mainly achieved the Enhancement level (Substitution and Augmentation) in ICT integration, with some progressing to the early stages of the Transformation level (Modification). However, those at the Modification level in this group displayed only two of the four key attributes for this stage.

In contrast, teachers trained using the IDDIRR model-based approach exhibited stronger progress. They

not only achieved all four attributes at the Modification level but also demonstrated further advancements. One participant even reached the Redefinition level by creating a website to support student learning. The analysis showed significant improvements in the technology-based materials developed by this group throughout the IDDIRR model's stages, particularly after the implementation, reflection, and revision phases.

These results suggest that the MOET's top-down, uniform training approach may not adequately address teachers' needs, especially in varied contexts. A more tailored, context-dependent model like IDDIRR is more effective, enabling teachers to enhance their skills in developing technology-driven materials. This aligns with previous findings that context-specific professional development is essential for meaningful ICT integration. The IDDIRR model offers teachers practical opportunities for application, reflection, and improvement in their teaching, fostering a more supportive environment for their professional growth. In conclusion, ICT training should be customized for different educational levels and contexts to maximize its impact. Moreover, establishing networks and professional learning communities could help teachers share resources and experiences, further promoting ICT integration in education. Clear policies to encourage ICT use, currently lacking in Vietnam's educational framework, should also be introduced to support these efforts.

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# Social and Language Skills in the Human Sciences Era: A Cost-Benefit Simulator

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## ABSTRACT

Rapid developments in technology have distracted educators from noticing developments in the human sciences (the sciences that study humans: their behaviours, their cultures, and the institutions they build). While developments in the digital sciences are valuable, it is the human sciences that we must turn to achieve sustainable human thriving. This research is part of a broader project that approaches education as an applied human science for fostering the skills for thriving. Of the different sets of skills for human thriving, it is social (and language) skills that permit us to develop collective, sustainable solutions for the world's wickedest problems. This research has two objectives: (1) to apply developments in both the human sciences (especially the science of learning) and computer science to design the outline of a technology-empowered curriculum for fostering social skills; and (2) to build a computer-based systems dynamics simulator for exploring the societal costs and benefits of implementing such a curriculum. This paper integrates methodologies from the disciplines of futures studies, project management, and the science of learning. In particular, it integrates the methods of environmental scanning, triangulation, the Delphi Technique, systems analysis and design, construction, chunking, and focused and diffuse thinking. The theme of this conference is "Education Creativity and Sustainability in the Digital Era". Universities are the guildhalls, the gathering places of the scholars from all disciplines. It is social skills that give us the ability to pool our strengths to create a sustaining, thriving future for humanity.

**Keywords:** Education economics; Immersive learning; Life-long and life-wide learning; Science of learning; Social skills curriculum; Systems dynamics.

## 1. Context

### 1.1. A human sciences era

The theme of this conference is "Education Creativity and Sustainability in the Digital Era". Applications from the digital sciences are undoubtedly transformative, fascinating and valuable. But, we suggest, developments in the human sciences – the sciences that study humans, their behaviours, and the institutions they build – are as, if not more, transformative and valuable. (Thomas Kuhn (1962/1970), the influential science historian coined the term paradigm shift to describe such transformative scientific developments.) Transformative developments overturn previous concepts and ways of thinking. Transformative developments require us to redesign existing institutions and industries. They also require us to think differently about our research methods and disciplines.

This paper is part of a broader project to identify and map out the implications of developments in the human sciences<sup>1</sup> for education. Earlier transformative discoveries gave us the industrial and agricultural revolutions. No longer are food and other material goods key constraints for human survival. Furthermore, the human sciences have given us transformative new insights into human behaviour and the institutions and cultures we build. It calls us to re-examine the purpose of education and the institutions we use to

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<sup>1</sup> With a focus on discoveries on how humans learn – the science of learning.



achieve this purpose. Our project, after exploring the literature on the purpose of education, chose to define education as:

*Education is an applied human science whose purpose is to foster the skills for individual and collective thriving.*

We propose that thriving has five inter-related dimensions: (1) physical; (2) mental; (3) emotional; (4) social; and (5) economic. The skills required to optimally thrive in each of these five dimensions can be learned. It is also useful to recognise and give prominence to the skill of self-directed learning (Figure 1.1). The skill of self-directed learning permits the individual to take control of and responsibility for the development of their skills. Furthermore, it makes the learning of skills much faster and cheaper – benefitting both the individual and the tax-payer.

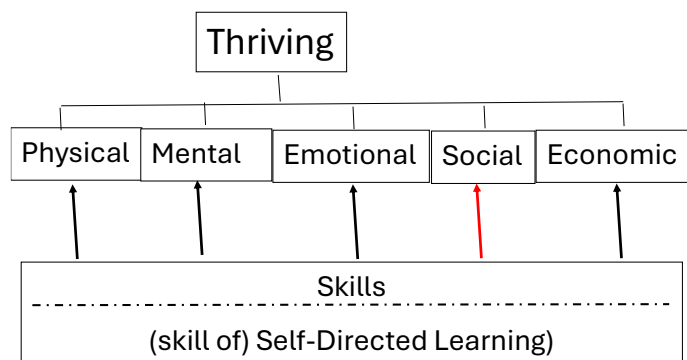


Figure 1.1 Taxonomy of the skills for thriving

Furthermore, we propose that we should re-imagine education as not simply the purview of a school and university system for children and young adults, but learning as a life-long and life-wide<sup>2</sup> collaborative activity by all. We have proposed a fishbone model of neurobiological and socioeconomic life stages that education should take into account when designing curricula and instruction.

Humans are social animals. We work together to raise our young and build prosperous communities. Furthermore, some of the most crucial problems we face such as violence - in the home, between communities, or between nations; as well as other crucial problems such as pollution and climate change require solutions that demand collaborative social skills. As such, in this research, we turn our attention to the dimension of social skills. The purpose of this research is to develop a credible outline of a life-long and life-wide curriculum for the learning of social skills. We deconstruct this purpose into two specific objectives:

- (1) specify an outline of a curriculum for learning social skills; and
- (2) build a model to explore the costs and benefits of such a curriculum

Two sets of conceptual frameworks previously developed in our broader project are necessary for understanding this paper. As the research and analysis justifying these frameworks have been published, we only briefly summarise and cite them. Readers wishing further details are welcome to explore the previous publications.

The first framework is of five transformational discoveries in the science of learning (Somasundaram, 2017, 2018):

1. **Thinking:** We humans have two different, powerful, and valuable ways of thinking.

<sup>2</sup> By life-wide we mean that learning occurs not only in the classroom or during study session, but 24 hours a day. For example, the right type of sleep is critical for long-term memory formation and skill retention. To optimally learn, we must leverage our life-wide activities.

We choose the terms ‘focused thinking’ and ‘diffuse thinking’ (Oakley, 2014, 2017; Oakley & Sejnowski, 2014) to describe these two ways of thinking. Educational systems overwhelmingly emphasise focused thinking. The practice of social skills relies heavily on diffuse thinking, while deliberately learning social skills is often better done with focused thinking<sup>3</sup>.

**2. Learning:** Learning *is* Memorization, and we now know how memory works;

Learning occurs through the strengthening of brain cell connections. We now have robust insights on how to learn quickly and efficiently<sup>4</sup>. For example skills that are immediately applicable outside the classroom (such as social skills) are learned better than skills taught for future use. This is for three principal reasons. Firstly, students are motivated to put more effort into learning as they experience the usefulness of the skill. Secondly, routine practice outside the classroom embeds the skill more deeply. And thirdly, skills that aren’t practiced get forgotten.

**3. Behaviour:** Cognitive, sensory-motor, emotional, social, and endocrine operations are all closely integrated;

The mind and the body are closely integrated. In particular, social skills are heavily dependent on emotional skills<sup>5</sup>.

**4. Stages:** Sensitive periods in the human life-cycle provide windows of both greater opportunity and danger;

Some periods in the human life-cycle have greater impact on life-time thriving than others. The most critical of these periods is the first thousand days after conception (Somasundaram et al., 2023). We suggest that the second most impactful period is the years after puberty. A curriculum on social skills must leverage these two periods in particular.

**5. Self-Regulation:** Habits trump will-power.

It is better to rely on good habits rather than will-power to achieve the regular objectives necessary for thriving<sup>6</sup>.

The second conceptual framework from the wider project is a fishbone model for lifelong education. The model is developed by breaking the human life-cycle into two sets of stages. The first set of stages are the neurobiological stages that we humans move through from conception to death. Our needs and capacities change biologically, and an understanding of these changes a better targeting of the skills for lifelong thriving. The second set of stages are the socio-economic stages of life an individual moves through, from the womb to palliative care. They each require different skills, and the task of education is to ensure the individual has the skills to transition into and thrive in each socio-economic environment. The model can be visualised as a fishbone (Figure 1.2), with the anterior ribs representing the neurobiological stages and the posterior ribs representing the socio-economic stages. The head of the fishbone represents the skill of self-directed learning, as this skill gives an individual the ability to select and develop the skills they need during life.

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<sup>3</sup> Social skills require the capacity to quickly assess many, often subtle pieces of information, and to respond in sophisticated ways. For example, a smile could signal genuine happiness and friendship, mocking superiority, or a forced greeting (to list just three possibilities). A viewer examines the specific muscles that are being used, and other contextual clues to interpret the hidden meaning. Their own response is also communicated with many subtle signals. Diffuse thinking permits the mind to deal quickly with such large amounts of information, (typically at a sub- or semi-conscious level). Learning social skills is often better done, learning one component at a time before putting it all together.

<sup>4</sup> For example skills that are immediately applicable outside the classroom (such as social skills) are learned better than skills taught for future use. This is for two reasons. Firstly, students are motivated to put more effort into learning as they experience the usefulness of the skill. Secondly, routine practice outside the classroom embeds the skill more deeply. The importance of immediate skill use is embedded in our vision for life-wide education.

<sup>5</sup> For example, individuals must be capable of recognizing one’s own emotional state and being able to control it to achieve optimal social outcomes. Individuals must also be able to identify others’ emotions and appreciate the impact these emotions may have on their own (emotions are contagious) and others’ behavior.

<sup>6</sup> Will-power is effortful and tiring while habits operate smoothly and effortlessly once formed. The methods for developing good habits and suppressing bad habits (such as the principles of cognitive behavior therapy) can be taught.

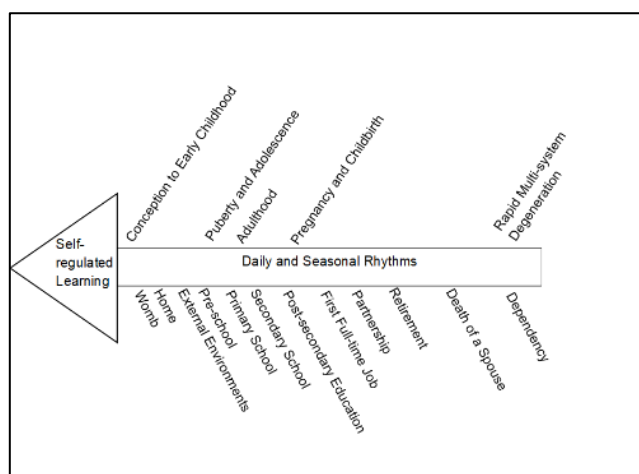


Figure 1.2 A fishbone model for life-long and life-wide learning.  
Adapted from Somasundaram et al. (2019)

More recent work in the project has focused on exploring the costs and benefits of implementing these concepts. The project first explored the benefits and costs of implementing a framework for self-directed learning (Somasundaram et al., 2022). Last year's work shifted to the crucial first thousand days of life, a period which currently receives minimal educational funding (Somasundaram et al., 2023). This work led us to a greater appreciation of the importance of social skills, since some of the interventions proposed by the project relied heavily on building the social skills of the caregivers. Therefore, this year's work focuses specifically on social skills.

In the next section of this paper, we briefly describe the methods and tools used for this year's research. In the third section, we describe the results of our environmental scan and literature review. In the fourth section, outline a curriculum for fostering social skills. In the fifth section, we present the computer simulation for exploring the costs and benefits of funding such a curriculum. In the final section, we summarise our work.

## 2. Research Methods

The research methods used for the research described in this paper are the same as those used in other aspects of the broader project, and we have published these methods in previous work. We therefore confine the descriptions in this section to that which is essential to understand this research. Readers wishing greater detail can explore our previous publications, which are all openly available.

We gathered information for the outline curriculum by combining a literature search using the term 'social skills' with information gathered from our broader research into developments in the human sciences. The literature search yielded a substantial body of valuable knowledge on social skills curriculum elements and assessments methods. In our view, the literature was limited in that it was largely based on a deficit model, and set a fairly low standard on the scope of social skills<sup>7</sup> – it somewhat poorly incorporated current developments in the science of human behaviour. The curricula were in the form of short courses, while our perspective was for a lifelong curriculum – comparable to how mathematics is taught, starting with number recognition and counting in the early years, progressing to fractions and algebra in the middle years and advanced calculus in later years. As such, our broader research into current developments in the human science allowed us to create a broader and more sophisticated curriculum.

We also gathered information on the costs and benefits of teaching social skills. The literature was similar to other aspects of educational cost/benefit research, with the bulk of the research being short term studies that showed some evidence of positive benefits, with longer-term longitudinal studies showing reducing

<sup>7</sup> For example, much of literature stems from work to teach social skills to children suffering mental health illnesses such as autism that cause poor social behaviors.

benefits over time. These results align with our findings from human learning, that skills need to be regularly reinforced if they are to be maintained.

### **3. An Outline of a Social Skills Curriculum**

In this section we outline a life-long and life-wide curriculum for social skills. Though this paper focuses on social skills, social skills are closely integrated with the other skills required for thriving, and successfully teaching the social skills curriculum requires parallel development of the other skills, and these integrated relationships are reflected in our discussion below.

The outline curriculum has two components: (1) knowledge; and (2) procedures.

Knowledge consists of data and the relationships between this data. Commonly used terms for knowledge include theory and taxonomies. Knowledge gives meaning to procedures why and when certain procedures work better than others. Along with providing meaning, teaching knowledge provides two other major benefits. Firstly, knowledge provides a degree of future-proofing: scientific knowledge is always advancing, and students who understand current knowledge are better able to appreciate future scientific advances and how it should modify procedures. Secondly, knowledge improves the students' capacity to find novel solutions – to be creative (what educators call near and far transfer). Knowledge allows us to appreciate patterns – the relationships between data. The human mind is good at matching similarities between patterns, is able to notice similar patterns between novel situations and existing knowledge. Knowledge gives meaning, provides a level of future-proofing, and enhances novel problem-solving.

Procedures are the methods, the sequence of steps needed to achieve a successful outcome. For example, a successful public speaker will, prior to walking on stage, relax their face and body by taking relaxing slow, deep breaths and exercise their facial muscles and vocal cords. They walk on stage standing tall, and will scan and assess the mood of the crowd. The successful speaker may also identify individuals or groups in the crowd whose energy can be tapped into. These procedures are often habituated in the expert, who may perform them without full conscious awareness. For example, an experienced teacher described an action he became aware of only while reflecting on the day's classes. While he was discussing a maths procedure at the front of the class, a group of boys at the back of the class were talking among themselves. While continuing to lecture, the teacher moved to where the boys were, and moved back to the front of the class after the boys had settled down. The teacher didn't even consciously notice that the boys had been unruly until he reviewed the lesson in the evening. The expertly skilled perform many of their procedures at a semi- or sub-conscious manner, freeing their conscious mind for other tasks.

The outline curriculum we propose has twelve topics, described briefly below, listed in the sequence appropriate for the learner's socioeconomic and neurobiological stages.

#### **3.1 Serve and Return**

'Serve and Return' is a phrase used by the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2024) to describe the central building block for social skills. The phrase is adapted from tennis, describing the bank and forth hitting of the ball between two players. The passing of messages between people is the central building block of all communication. Parents and other caregivers begin social skills development in infants with serve and return responses as the infant and their caregiver start responding to each others' behaviour. Furthermore, just as tennis players gain mastery in stages, improving their capacities to direct the ball with increasingly sophisticated power and spin, recognising the other player's strengths and weaknesses, and adjusting to court conditions and environment. So too do social serve and returns become more sophisticated, as individual learn the complexities of good social skills performance.

#### **3.2 Micro skills**

Virtually all social skills are composed of several integrated smaller skills. For example, during a conversation, individuals simultaneously communicate with tone and timbre of voice, facial movements such as smiles and frowns, as well as larger bodily movements. These multiple communication channels

are often only partially developed in most people. Professional communicators, such as actors and singers often spend years honing their micro-skills. The use of and meanings attributed to these micro-skills often vary by culture – a common example is the sounds ‘l’ and ‘r’ which require specific tongue, vocal chord, and mouth movements, whose use varies across cultures. These skills are easiest learned during the early developmental stages when the neurons and muscles are the most plastic. Singing, drama and other arts are particularly beneficial during the very early years of play.

### 3.3 Theory of Mind

Theory of mind is a phrase used in the psychological literature to describe the phase, usually during toddlerhood, that a child starts recognising themselves as individuals and separate from others. As theory of mind develops, children start realising that others have emotions and perspectives different from their own. This leads to a recognition that one’s own emotions and behaviours are influenced by and also influence others’ behaviours and emotions.

### 3.4 Socio-emotional skills

The learning of emotional skills (the skills of understanding and managing one’s own emotions) is an important skill in its own right and requires its own separate curriculum. By socio-emotional skills, we mean the capability of diagnosing others’ emotions and the skills of influencing their emotions. Experiences of this skill begins in infancy. For example, a skilled care-giver will calm a sick, agitated child with soothing behaviour and suppress their own anxieties about the child’s illness. In contrast, a poor care-giver will respond to a hungry, whining child by getting angry – escalating the negative emotions.

### 3.5 Psycho-social skills.

Along with transient emotions, individual and group behaviour is influenced by personality traits. The best regarded and studied taxonomy of personality traits is that referred to as the big five: (1) Openness; (2) Conscientiousness; (3) Extraversion; (4) Agreeableness; and (5) Neuroticism (with the mnemonics of OCEAN or sometimes CANOE). Just as understating one’s own personality type can help one manage one’s own behaviour, understanding others personality type can help with understanding and influencing other’s behaviour. For example when allocating tasks during team work, some tasks are better performed by a conscientious individual, and other tasks by an agreeable individual.

### 3.6 Social-health skills.

An individual’s mental health affects both their own social behaviour as well as others around them. Many mental health illnesses, such as anxiety, depression, and excessive gambling and drug and alcohol misuse can be reduced (though perhaps not fully cured) with appropriate skills. Psychological skills such as talk therapy, cognitive behaviour therapy, and mindfulness, can substantially reduce symptoms and harmful behaviours. These psychological skills are now widely known and practiced in a somewhat ad-hoc and amateurish manner. For example, a person who has experienced a stressful situation may seek informal talk therapy sessions with a friend or partner capable of listening non-judgementally. We suggest that such psychological skills are essential life skills that should be rigorously taught in a curriculum that fosters human thriving.

### 3.7 Institutional Logics

Institutional logics is a recent specialised discipline that studies both cultures and organisations. Both cultures and organisations have values and behavioural rules, many of which are often unwritten and informal. Individuals typically belong to multiple organisations and cultures, each with differing values and rules, and move between these several times a day. For example, the behavioural rules and expectations for a person at home, at work, and at a bar with friends are different. Good social skills means that the individual is aware of and manages with the values and rules of differing social settings. Institutional logics provides a rigorous framework of understanding values and rules the individual deals with in different cultures and organisations.

### 3.8 Dominance Hierarchies and Social Hierarchies

Human groups naturally organise themselves into dominance hierarchies and social hierarchies. Researchers have developed substantial knowledge regarding these hierarchies. However, this knowledge is often treated as taboo, like sex, and scientific knowledge is rarely discussed openly and objectively. The term dominance hierarchy is more often used to describe the sexual hierarchies in social animals. Dominance hierarchies are linear, and separate hierarchies exist for males and females. The term social hierarchy is used more often in the social literature to describe hierarchies based on social and political status, and include both genders. A knowledge of dominance and social hierarchies allows individuals to thoughtfully navigate social spaces.

### 3.9 Social networks and relationships

Individuals form social relationships as they progress through life. These social relationships can benefit both parties as the parties support and do favours for each other. Examples of these relationships could be relatives, school mates, and work colleagues. Strong social networks are part of an individual's social capital, and there is benefit in systematically building and maintaining wide social networks. But social relationships can also be harmful, such as a close family member who keep 'borrowing' money that they never return. Maintaining good social networks is a valuable skill.

### 3.10 Team skills

People often need to work in teams to achieve complex mutually beneficial goals. Team skills can be usefully divided into technical skills social- team skills. Social team skills are the skills such as maintaining team cohesion, full participation and group motivation. In a high-performance team, all team members are 'leaders' proactively practicing social-team skills.

### 3.11 Social Stages

In Figure 1.2, we present a fishbone diagram of neurobiological and socio-economic stages. Knowledge of these stages allows individuals to prepare for and manage the transitions between these stages. For example, when moving to a new job, and individual quickly seek to understand the organisation's institutional logics and develop useful social networks with co-workers.

Another useful taxonomy of social relationship stages is that of dependence/ independence/ interdependence/ legacy/ dependence. Infants and young children are wholly dependent on caregivers. As they progress through puberty and young adulthood, they actively seek to break away from dependence and to operate independently – they rebel against adult orders. As they mature, they move to form and recognise social bods of interdependence. As they progress into late adulthood, they become more interested in once legacy, such as interest in charitable works and grandchildren. In the final stage of life, they become less able to are for themselves, and become more and more dependent on others.

### 3.12 Environmental Cues

Environments can also be managed in ways to achieve one's goals. For example, having meeting rooms with round tables communicates a different message to rooms with rectangular tables with a chairperson sitting in a bigger seat. Serving different types of food sends different messages. Recognising social cues from how environments ae designed is a social skill.

## 4. Developments in Computer Science and Technology

The rapid advances in computer science and technology have three types of impact on education. Firstly, computer technology shapes the skills that students need to learn to successfully thrive in the future. For example, Technology is becoming expert at speech recognition, transcription and language translation. This means that there will be less demand for workers with these skills, and education to teach these skills. Secondly, technology shapes the way students are taught. For example, there is a substantial increase in on-line courses, with substantial reductions in cost. Thirdly, demands on the teaching and educational

workforce changes. For example, with increasing on-line courses, there is less demand for direct teaching skills, and greater demand placed on sophisticated instruction design and assessment techniques.

With regards to social skills education, we predict that transcription and translation services will increasingly be automated, with less demands for multi-lingual graduates. Apps and other low-cost technology are also increasing taking over the teaching of languages.

Future technology will become better at identifying timbre and vocal inflections, and identifying attributes such as aggressive, dominating or passive behaviours in groups. Further into the future, technology will become adept at reading facial and bodily expressive communications and as such, technology will become an increasing economic tool for assessing social skills.

## 5. Cost Benefit Analysis

Cost-benefit analysis is an essential element of all public policy making – public policies are about how to allocate scarce resources to obtain maximum benefit. The funding of one policy always requires lesser funds available for other policies<sup>8</sup>. As such, our model adopts a cost-neutral approach: that is, that public educational funding is a fixed portion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and increases in social skills education will be offset by reduced funding being available for other skills education.

Robust cost-benefit analysis in education is also a very early science. The issues to be overcome are complex and difficult. Education delivers life-time benefits, and long-term longitudinal studies are virtually impossible to perform. Furthermore, the benefits of education are quite wide-ranging, Establishing suitable metrics for even a single benefit such as health is quite difficult, even more difficult is to establish generic measures that can span multiple disciplines. As such, we consider our design a ‘sandbox’ – an area for playing with alternative designs of the future rather than a rigorous analysis that reliably predicts the future benefits.

We model life-long curriculum implementation through three principal tactics: (1) Parents as First Teachers (PAFT); (2) the existing schooling system; and (3) Independent Credentialing Organisations (ICOs). We group the benefits of social skills into three areas: (1) reduced crime and justice system costs; (2) reduced mental health disorders and substance misuse (including gambling and drinking); and (3) increased employment and earnings.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper is part of a broader project that explores the implications of developments in the science of learning for the future of education. We view the purpose of education as fostering the skills for individual and collective thriving. We believe that social skills are crucial for human thriving, but are substantially undervalued and taught by our education systems. This paper outlines a curriculum for social skills development as a life-long and life-wide activity.

Our review of the literature that there has been substantial progress in the development of social-skills curricula and assessment methods. However, these curricula often suffer from (1) being implemented piecemeal; and (2) developed for a deficit model of social skills; and (3) not incorporating current knowledge from social science research (such as dominance hierarchies). As such, the contribution of our research makes is the inclusion of current developments.

Furthermore, we recommend that social skills should be incorporated and included as an important part of the national educational curriculum (comparable to mathematics and language skills<sup>9</sup>). It is important for the curriculum be set at a national level so that all students have access to a rigorously developed and consistent curriculum.

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<sup>8</sup> O raising taxes, and thus depriving the public of money for their own needs.

<sup>9</sup> Language skills including reading, writing and foreign languages *are* social skills – as they are basic elements of social interactions.

Many of today's most difficult problems – such as war, social inequity, and even climate change<sup>10</sup>, require social skills to resolve. For education to deliver creativity and sustainability in the twenty first century, social skills must be an important part of the national curriculum. This paper is preliminary work – our goal is to develop and foster a vision of the future that energises scholars and practitioners to extend and adapt this work in their own visions.



Figure 3: Teaching students emotional skills and social skills. The best education is that which engages students and is immediately relevant to and practicable in their lives. © (Kouwshigan & Somasundaram, 2020).

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<sup>10</sup> The underlying problem of climate change is that benefits and harms are unfairly distributed – a social problem. For example, when a farmer burns forest to create farmland, it is the neighbors who have to put up with the smog and lung disease.



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# An Investigation into The Use of Functional Approach to Translation in a Grammar Course at a University in Vietnam

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## ABSTRACT

The main focus of this research is to explore the effect of functional approaches to translation on students' awareness of Reported speech. With descriptive research design using qualitative and quantitative data, this research relies on primary sources of data including students' test results and interviews among 34 first-year students from a university in Vietnam. Tests were conducted before and after workshops on functional approaches to translation. According to research findings, functional approaches to translation improved students' post-test results compared to their pretest results. In addition, students' awareness of functional approaches to translation or contextual factors of a translation was also improved significantly. Through interviews, students also demonstrated a favorable attitude towards the functional approaches to translation in their language learning process. The functional approaches to translation generally had a good effect on students' grammar learning. This research indicates the feasibility of the functional approaches to translation in the teaching of grammar. If these approaches are implemented for various types of students at different levels of education, the results related to language learning will be outstanding. Further research is needed in the application of functional approaches to translation as a useful tool in language teaching in general or grammar teaching in particular.

**Keywords:** Functional approaches to translation, Students' awareness, Reported speech, Vietnam

## Introduction

The role of translation has been controversial in language teaching and learning throughout the ages (Carreres & Sánchez, 2021). In many classrooms, translation activities associated with the grammar-translation methodology (GTM), which has been criticized as being incompatible with a communicative approach, have not been much favoured by teachers. However, recent approaches in the area of language and translation pedagogy have helped re-conceptualize – and re-operationalize – translation in radically new ways (Carreres & Sánchez, 2021). Numerous studies have demonstrated that translation can be a useful tool for enhancing learners' linguistic proficiency (Carreres, 2014; Carreres & Sánchez, 2021; Cook, 2010; Leonardi & Salvi, 2016) and they emphasized the need to see translation as a communicative tool.

Numerous studies have advocated integrating functionalist perspectives into the teaching of translation in language programs. For example, translation activities that emphasize the effects of contextual features (such as text, author, reader, and function) on understanding and producing texts are provided to students by Colina and Lafford (2018), who see translation as both a means and an end in Spanish language teaching. Nguyen (2019) conducted a study, which was implemented in the English program at a university in Vietnam, involving third-year undergraduate English. This study, which introduced to students the concepts of functional approaches to translation, focuses on students' problem-solving processes, emphasizing the role of text features in the decision-making process, particularly the function of translation. Carreres and Sánchez (2021) introduced some examples of translation tasks aiming to help learners improve their language skills through translation as well as develop their translation skills.

Although the functional approaches to translation have been used in language classes, few studies have provided empirical evidence on the applicability and effectiveness of functional approaches to translation

in language learning by students of varying language proficiency. Therefore, further research is necessary to determine how functional approaches to translation affect students' acquisition of various aspects of language.

This study investigates the use of functional approaches to translation in a grammar course at a university in Vietnam. This study also hopes to contribute to insights into the applicability and effectiveness of the functional approaches to translation for the English teaching and learning through the results of students in a grammar course. Specifically, the effect of functional approaches to translation was considered through an experiment in a grammar class to examine how functional approaches to translation affected and supported students' learning of Reported speech (RS). This study addresses the following question: How do functional approaches to translation affect students' awareness of Reported speech?

## **Literature Review**

### ***A Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework of Larsen-Freeman***

With the belief that grammar instruction should be based on pragmatics, Larsen-Freeman (2001) first designed and presented this framework. The design is a pie chart including three criteria: (1) structure or form; (2) semantics or meaning; and (3) use or the pragmatic conditions governing appropriate usage (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). Larsen-Freeman not only mentions and introduces the framework in the form of a pie chart, but the author also breaks down the components of this framework into simpler questions that teachers may use to introduce the lesson and help students understand grammar in a more "communicative" way. Questions raised regarding three-dimensional grammar include (1) Form - How is it formed?; (2) Meaning - What does it mean?; and (3) Use - When/Why is it used? (Freeman, 2001, p. 259).

### ***The Analysis of Reported Speech Components Following Freeman's Three-Dimensional Grammar Framework***

In this study, Reported speech is a grammar point used to investigate students' awareness of the effect of translation on their learning. For this reason, a quick analysis of some RS components using Larsen-Freeman's three-dimensional grammar framework is provided below:

#### **\* Form of Reported Speech**

The first part of Reported speech contains a reporting verb that is usually in the past simple (i.e., asked, told, said) because RS's nature is to report someone's words, which certainly happens before being reported. The second part is the words or requests of the person whose speech is being reported. There are at least three reporting types: statements, questions, and requests. In the indirect speech including statements and questions, specific words (including subjects, adverbs, and verbs) undergo a change in tense and form to create reported speech. This is called backshift (British Council, n.d.).

#### **\* Meaning of Reported Speech**

Reported speech represents the speech of other people or what people said. In reported speech, there are backshifts linked to the tense and foundation of words, adverbs, and verbs (British Council, n.d.).

#### **\* Use of Reported Speech**

When people want to tell someone what someone else stated, they use reported speech. RS can be used in social communication or discourse (British Council, n.d.).

### ***Functional Approaches to Translation and Their Application in Language Teaching***

Influenced by functional theories, Nord (2005) presented a model enabling the translator to comprehend the source text (ST) and make suitable decisions in light of the intended purpose of a translation. The three components of the model, including the translation brief, ST analysis, and the hierarchy of translation problems, can be used to build students' competence in translation during the training process (Nord, 2005). Reiss and Vermeer (2014) presented Skopos theory which advocates a translation is influenced by the function of translation. Besides, numerous studies emphasizing the role of contextual features in translation have advocated integrating functionalist perspectives, particularly those of Nord, into the teaching of translation in language programs (Carreres & Sánchez, 2021; Colina & Lafford, 2018; Nguyen, 2019;

Nguyen, 2023a; Nguyen, 2023b). These studies indicate the potential impact of the functional approaches to translation in enhancing students' translation skills as well as language skills. For example, Nguyen (2019) found that translation which is considered in the communicative view tends to enable students to enhance their sociolinguistic awareness and text comprehension.

Károly (2014) insisted that further studies were needed to demonstrate the effect of functional approaches to translation on the relationship between language learning and real-life situations. His study sought to identify and analyze different translation issues that beginning translation students encountered in translating three distinct English texts with European English (EU) topics. It was carried out on a small corpus of student translations, utilizing Nord's (2005) functional model. The findings demonstrated the use of functional approaches to translation can develop their cultural and textual awareness.

With the same view of the benefits of functional approaches to translation, Skopečková (2018) examined the innovative and as-yet-unrealized potential of the functionalist approach to translation in the context of foreign language learning. The study presented apparent advantages and emerging opportunities that teachers and students can benefit from this approach due to intricacies of translation which involves mediating a message between two different codes within a communicative context.

Not much study has been done on the use of translation as an approach to help students in foreign language programs improve their communication and translation skills. Also, little has been done on the application or effect of functional approaches to translation on learning grammar, for example, reported speech—a grammar point that involves the consideration of contextual elements. When applying functional approaches to translation to learning reported speech, students need to take into account how the reported speech fits within the overall context of the target text, taking into account the communicative intent. Therefore, this study will consider the impact of functional approaches to translation on students' grasp of RS and reinstate the role of translation in language learning.

## **Research Design**

This study used both qualitative and quantitative methods. The goal of this mainly qualitative research is to “fashion meaning out of events and phenomena” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 118) by examining the variety of experiences of a small group of people who provide their own opinions and interpretations of events. In theory, the qualitative method is used to comprehend the views of individuals, interactions, behaviors, and beliefs. Merriam (2002) emphasized “participants in qualitative research can create and understand their world” (p. 3–4). In this study, the authors focused on considering the effect of functional approaches to translation on learning English grammar (Reported speech) in classrooms by means of semi-interviews, and students' reflections. Meanwhile, the quantitative approach was used to analyze data obtained from student tests to see how student learning outcomes have changed.

## **Participants**

Twenty-seven female and seven male students who were numbered from 1 to 34 were in the first year of their English language program at a university in Vietnam. Their ages ranged from eighteen (18) to nineteen (19) years old. They were considered as language learners. The Vietnamese students whose mother tongue was Vietnamese were at level B1, the third level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). B1 learners are independent language users who have the essential fluency to communicate with native speakers easily (COE, n.d.).

## **The Research Procedure**

An experimental session to examine the effect of functional approaches to translation on students' learning of Reported Speech, was conducted in the Basic Grammar module for first-year students, in the English Language Program, at a university in Vietnam. Although they may have been exposed to translation, these students have never joined any formal classes in translation. This means they may not have any ideas about the functional approaches to translation.

The research took place outside formal classes in the first semester of the academic year, including four main stages as follows.



Figure 1: Procedure of Experimental Session and Data Collection

### ***The Pretest and Post-test***

The Pretest was used to gauge the student's level of fluency with RS knowledge and assess their translation skills before being introduced to the functional approaches to translation. The 25-minute pretest consisted of a short English text including direct speech sentences and students were asked to report these direct sentences in the text into indirect ones as well as translate the original text into Vietnamese. Pretest material was selected from Unit 6 - Gender Equality, the textbook *Global Success* Grade 10 published in 2022 by Vietnam Educational Publishing House in collaboration with Pearson Educational Publishing Group.

The Post-test was used to examine how the workshops affected students' awareness of translation, as well as to gauge how much students' understanding of RS had changed as a result of incorporating translation into their RS learning. The format and time of the post-test were similar to the pretest. The chosen material in the post-test was cited and referenced in Mark Harrison's (2008) textbook *Use of English*, titled "The Team Meeting", which is a part of Unit 5 of this textbook.

Pretest and Post-test include the following activities:

#### **(1) Grammar Tasks**

The pretest and post-test designed to examine students' prior knowledge of Reported speech included short texts (about 90 words for each text). Students were required to transfer numbered sentences into indirect ones, using the cues given. The difficulty of reported sentences in the two tests was considered to be equivalent in terms of content. However, reporting verbs used in the two tests (say, tell, and ask) varied, which may indicate students' understanding of RS.

#### **(2) Translation Tasks**

The pretest and post-test required students to read and translate two texts from English to Vietnamese. The features of the texts in the two tests, in terms of vocabulary, sentence structure, content, topic and contextual features, were comparable.

#### **(3) Written Comments – Students' Reflections**

Students were required to write about at least two challenges they had had during the pretest and post-test so that their experience during the tests could be explored. Students could opt to write in English or their mother tongue to express their ideas effectively.

### ***Workshops on Functional approaches to translation***

Under the guidance of the authors, thirty-four students took part in some translation activities in workshops introducing functional approaches to translation and did two pretest and post-test on Reported Speech. Activities related to translation in workshops were guided by the functional approaches to translation. This means students were required to focus on the context of the sentence or paragraph or the text function of the source text (ST). Students should keep in mind that translation is a real-world process of communication and that the translator also needs to consider the specified context, time, and specific sender and receiver of the message.

The 30-minute workshop 1 introduced to students the contextual elements in translation. Besides, this workshop also aimed to familiarize students with functional approaches to translation. The 50-minute workshop 2 was designed to provide students with the knowledge of text analysis in the translation process.

## Interviews

Open-ended questions in the interviews following the post-test were used to capture rich data from students' perceptions, ideas as well as attitudes. Both English and Vietnamese were utilized in the interviews.

Questions used in the interviews included:

1. Can you tell me something about your tasks?
2. How did translation support you in doing RS tasks?
3. Will you use translation in your future language learning?

## Data Analysis

Interviews and the results of pre-and post-test (Reported speech tasks and translation tasks) were the primary means for data collection and data analysis. Students' results of RS tasks and the translation tasks in the form of students' written comments and their translation solutions were analysed to identify changes in students' awareness of the RS in terms of its form, meaning, and use. Besides, the authors' reflections in the workshops were used as supportive data for this research.

As previously indicated, the reported speech was a grammar point chosen for this research. Students' understanding of the form, meaning, and use of this grammar point demonstrated their awareness of RS. Deficits in RS knowledge were identified by students' mistakes in the shifts of pronouns or time factors, tense usage, and structure. In general, to master reported speech, besides understanding the rules for tense and pronoun changes, it is important to pay attention to context and how it affects the reported speech. Therefore, considering students' translations of the personal pronouns or tenses used also provided evidence of students' understanding of the meaning and the form of RS.

Interviews were carried out and analyzed to provide an understanding of the effect of functional approaches to translation on students' RS test results.

## Findings and Discussion

In order to address the research question, “How do functional approaches to translation affect students' awareness of Reported speech?”, the authors analyzed the effect of translation on students' learning of RS regarding three main aspects: students' understanding of form, meaning, and use of RS, under Larsen-Freeman's three-dimensional grammar framework.

### *Overall change in students' awareness of translation through the workshops*

Before attending the workshops, the majority of students responded to questions regarding their ideas on translation by saying they used it frequently but had never really given it much thought. The authors considered that since participants had never finished formal translation assignments, it was argued that they were effectively “new translators”. Through the discussion, the authors realized that students often used word-for-word translation—a translation technique that they believed to be their instinct. They used translation to make sense of the activities or lessons while they did not pay any attention to the contextual factors in their translation.

After the workshops on functional approaches to translation, students' translations improved over time in terms of communicative features. Thanks to their understanding of the “communicative nature” of translation, most of the students considered that they translated the texts with more ease and smoothness. This was explained by the fact that the students “embedded” the texts into situations they had personally experienced. They also showed their recognition of the text's specific purposes for selecting more appropriate language.

Excerpt 1: “*When translating, I considered and tried to put myself in the context of the text. I linked my translations to the situations of my daily communication. I chose and decided on the words used in my translations. I thought, after the workshops, my translations seemed more fluid and accessible as a result*” (Student 9).

Besides, after the workshops, most of the students' feedback was positive. Based on the authors' observations of students' behaviors, and attitudes, and post-workshop discussions, it could be concluded

that the workshops had some success in changing students' awareness of translation. Students also showed their positive attitudes and active participation in the workshop process. Linked to their learning, students said that these approaches could help them much. Students stressed that they understood functional approaches to translation and that they thought they would apply them successfully in the future (Students 5, 12, 19, 23 & 25).

Excerpt 2: *“When translating, choosing words also helped me practice my vocabulary a lot. I often unconsciously translated along while reading a text or sentence. After the workshops, I understood more about functional approaches to translation and I think these approaches will be useful means to help me learn the language in the future”* (Student 25).

### ***Students’ awareness of the form of Reported speech***

Table 1: Summary of Students' Mistakes in Pretest and Post-test

Students’ mistakes in tests	Number of students in Pretest (34)	Number of students in Post-test (34)
Past form of verbs	7/34	1/34
The use of tenses in indirect sentences	10/34	0
The change of pronouns in indirect sentences	0	0
The structure of RS	15/34 (issues with the structure of “tell”)	12/34 (issues with the structure of “tell”) 7/34 (issues with the structure of request reporting “ask”)

Table 1 showed that students' common mistakes linked to the form of RS included incorrect past forms of verbs, tense misuse in indirect speech, and mistakes in RS structures. In general, in the pretest, most students correctly completed all the exercises associated with this grammatical point. Nonetheless, there were still mistakes in the past form of verbs (7/34 students), with the use of tenses in indirect sentences (10/34 students), and the use of the structure of “tell” in the reported statements (15/34 students) (see Table 1).

If mistakes in verb form in the past and those in the shift from direct to indirect tenses were thought to be the most frequent mistakes in the pretest, there was a noticeable improvement in these parts in the post-test. In the post-test, only one out of thirty-four students made mistakes in verb past forms (see Table 1), and none of them got in trouble in changing the tenses of direct to indirect sentences. However, in the post-test, students made some mistakes with reporting requests with the verb “ask” and statements with the verb “tell”. Students generally missed objects of sentences in these reported speech situations. These mistakes were all related to the lack of knowledge of the form or structure of RS. The structure of the reporting verb “tell” was a mistake students made since their pre-test. Although there was a decrease in the number of students making mistakes with “tell” (12 in the post-test compared to 15 in the pre-test), this number could still be said to be insignificant. Students explained their test-taking mistakes of "tell" by stating they frequently used the verb “say” when reporting statements, for which the objects could be understood implicitly. When asked to use “tell” for reported statements, students continued their habit of understanding the object implicitly, resulting in structural mistakes appearing in their answers in the pre-and post-test (see Table 1). Regarding the verb “ask” for reporting requests in the post-test, students clarified that their carelessness and ignorance of the reporting forms were the causes of these mistakes. However, there was a noticeable increase in the number of students who correctly answered all of the RS exercise questions (20 in the post-test compared to 13 in the pre-test) (see Table 2). This can indicate students were making progress with their RS exercises.

Table 2: Students’ Reported Speech Results in Pre- and Post-test

Number of correct answers	Pretest	Post-test
9	13	20
8	10	10
7	5	4

Number of correct answers	Pretest	Post-test
6	3	0
5	3	0
4	0	0
3	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
All answers are incorrect	0	0

The majority of students (28 out of 34) responded with affirmative answers on the effect of functional approaches to translation on doing RS exercises. They stressed that they unconsciously translated the text and the sentences of exercises in the post-test into Vietnamese when they began reading the text and even during the RS tasks. The act of translation supported them much in grasping the form of RS as well as in improving their test results.

Excerpt 3: “*Translations that spontaneously came to mind during the exercise process helped me remember the structures as well as clearly define how to use those structures, for example, when making a request, there needs to be an object being requested, or in other words, I need to pay attention to the object*” (Student 31 mentioned the structure “Ask someone to do something”).

Besides, most of the students highlighted that functional approaches to translation reminded them of the contextual elements and allowed them to understand the text's content. They were able to grasp who the characters in the text were and what they were conveying. Therefore, they found it easier to transfer the factors in direct sentences, such as the subject, to indirect ones, as required by the exercise. Students also expressed that grammar tasks were more interesting (Students 6 & 15), exercises seemed to be much easier to understand (Students 10, 19, 23 & 31), and they could understand the meaning of vocabulary as well as grasp better sentences structures (Students 1, 3, 22 & 31), thanks to functional approaches to translation. This can be initially assessed as a positive effect of functional approaches to translation on students' awareness of the RS's form.

### ***Students' awareness of the meaning of Reported speech***

Table 3: Students' Translation of Personal Pronouns in Pretest and Post-test

Student's translation of 'I' and 'You'	Number of students in Pretest	Student's translation of 'I' and 'You'	Number of students in Post-test
'I' = 'tôi' 'You' = 'bạn'	22	'I' = 'tôi' 'We' = 'chúng tôi' 'You' = 'bạn'	10
'I' = 'tớ' / 'mình' 'You' = 'bạn' / 'cậu'	7	'I' = 'em' 'We' = 'tụi em / chúng em' 'You' = 'cậu / các cậu / các em'	23
'I' = 'tôi' 'You' = 'cậu'	2	Translations that did not involve directly translating the direct speech or translating the pronouns 'I', 'you' and 'we' explicitly into Vietnamese	1
Translations that did not involve directly translating the direct speech or translating the pronouns 'I' and 'you' explicitly into Vietnamese	3		

The data showed that the mistakes in the pretest and post-test were partly related to students' understanding of meaning, particularly when tenses were involved. Students' understanding of the meaning of reported speech might be expressed when they applied backshifts or changed the verbs in indirect speech.



Positive results appeared in the post-test when no students produced wrong tenses in indirect sentences, which was a significant drop from the ten students with mistakes in the pre-test (see Table 1). Besides, there were no subject-related mistakes in indirect sentences in both tests. These results mean that students partly understood the meaning of the RS sentence.

In addition, the fact that students changed personal pronouns appropriately and accurately suggested that they considered the people whose speeches were being reported. These were linked to their translation of personal pronouns as shown in the following example.

Excerpt 4: *“I took contextual considerations into account while translating, then modified the translation of personal pronouns in my translation tasks. This has also contributed to my increased knowledge of the RS activity I was doing. For instance, I am reporting the words of a group of friends, and by doing so, I will have a deeper understanding of both the sentences I am reporting and the nature of the meaning of RS”* (Student 15).

Overall, there was a noticeable shift in students' pronoun translations from the pretest to the post-test (see Table 3). Contextual elements seemed to be given more consideration in post-test translations. When asked about their improvement in RS exercises, students affirmed that translation helped them have more awareness of the meaning of sentences, the nature of RS (reporting someone's speech), and the role of contextual factors. Therefore, students' test results had higher accuracy when completing indirect sentences. It can be seen that, in addition to the form of RS, translation affected the student's awareness of the meaning of RS.

### ***Students' awareness of the use of Reported speech***

Regarding the use of RS, most students were aware of the situations in which they needed to use RS and the reasons why they needed to use RS. Students considered RS could be employed in written discourses as well as daily life, in which reporting someone else's words is common. They also linked the RS tasks with their real situations, which made them feel the exercises more exciting. Therefore, it can be said that translation affected student's awareness of the use of RS.

Excerpt 5: *“I used translation while working on the RS task, and I became aware of several advantages it had for my learning. Following the workshops, I translated the exercise sentences with greater attention to contextual factors and automatically applied them to real-world communication scenarios. This helped me become more aware of the situations in which I may use RS in my daily life”* (Student 10).

Through interviews with students, attending the workshops on functional approaches to translation, and applying translation to their learning gave students a fresh perspective on learning, and even if they only used it accidentally—students read the RS tasks and unconsciously translated them from English to Vietnamese. Students' translations also demonstrated the effect of functional approaches to translation on students' awareness of the use of RS. Students emphasized that they understood the meaning of the sentences, grasped the importance of contextual elements in translation, and related their translations to actual contexts following the workshops on functional approaches to translation (Students 3, 9, 15 & 23).

Assessing students' understanding of the three components of RS—form, meaning, and use—as per Larsen-Freeman's framework enabled us to ascertain the improvement in RS knowledge that students attained as a result of the introduction of functional approaches to translation. The effect of translation on students' learning of RS has been shown by students' RS test results and interviews. In general, students' outcomes helped provide a positive answer to the research question concerning how the functional approaches to translation affected students' awareness of RS.

### ***Students' awareness of the use of functional approaches to translation in their language learning***

At the beginning of Workshop 1, students who were questioned about their use of translation in their language learning admitted that when learning English, they always tended to use translation. The majority of student reported that they used translation frequently and that it was highly beneficial to their study. Students notably remarked that translation aided in their knowledge of grammar and reading. After the

workshops, they said that their language learning would be far more effective and advanced when they employed “functional translation” after taking part in the workshops.

Excerpt 6: *“Functional approaches to translation helped me learn better, made the language learning process more interesting, and created a connection among my mother tongue language, the language I am studying, and real-life situations”* (Students 15).

Excerpt 7: *“Translation plays a very important role because my major is Translation and Interpretation. I need to understand and use translation more “accurately” and “soulfully” if I want to become a “skilled” translator in the future. It can be easier for me to use translation more successfully now that I understand and have the chance to explore functional approaches to translation”* (Student 27).

Some students stressed that functional approaches to translation were a more supportive tool in their future language learning process (Students 4, 10, 12 & 15), and their learning language was much more smoothly, more effective, and more interesting with these approaches (Students 9, 14, 26, 31 & 33). In general, these approaches were defined in their mind as “tools to support better understanding in grammar” (Students 6 & 19), “supportive tools for better understanding the culture and language you are learning” (Students 10, 17 & 31), and “tools to help cultivate and develop multilingualism” (Student 30). Besides, they expressed that these approaches played an essential role and may be used frequently (Students 5, 12, 14, 15, 27, 30 & 31).

## Discussion

The data showed that students had improvements both in their results of RS tasks and their understanding of translation as a communication tool. Students demonstrated how functional approaches to translation aided in their acquisition of RS knowledge. Simultaneously, through the interviews, the authors considered that students were more passionate when talking about how they would use translation in the future.

After the workshops, students maintained that their translations were more “communicative” in nature, which is considered a positive result of the workshops on functional approaches to translation. In addition, the authors' use of interview questions allowed the partial capture of students' justifications and ideas regarding how their understanding of translation had changed. Students claimed that their view of translation used to be merely an instinctive response to the demands of comprehending texts and finishing assignments. However, after the workshops, they discovered the potential benefits of translation, particularly, functional approaches to translation. They stated that these approaches promoted their comprehension of the text content and that their consideration of contextual factors during the translation process created a connection between language acquisition and their everyday life. This aligns with the finding of Károly (2014) who found students' increased awareness of the connection between text and context due to the use of functional approaches to translation.

This study also demonstrated how functional approaches to translation aided in establishing a link between language learners and their everyday situations. Additionally, they could help students with their communication skills. This research finding was similar to students' comments in Károly (2014) and Skopečková (2018) regarding the benefits of functional approaches to translation on their learning.

Based on the authors' observations, although translation activities are frequently used in language classes, there is no formal program to develop translation skills and knowledge. As a result, teachers and students may use translation without fully comprehending it, and they may also fail to fully take advantage of the advantages translation can offer in terms of language teaching and learning. The authors believe that functional approaches to translation can be seen as a two-pronged approach to language learning, as they support and enhance students' acquisition of grammatical skills while also improving their vocabulary, sentence structure, and communication comprehension. It is expected that employing translation to help students learn grammar has a profound effect on students' learning, and when implemented appropriately, the effectiveness of translation may increase. This study emphasizes the potential of functional approaches to translation in language classrooms.

## Conclusion

Translation activities have their role in improving learners' language abilities; however, their potential has not been fully exploited. The functional approaches to translation which focus on contextual factors in translation were presented to first-year students majoring in English at a university in Vietnam. This study aims to investigate the effect of functional approaches to translation on students' RS awareness through four stages including Pretest, Workshop, Post-test, and Interview.

Research findings showed that functional approaches to translation were useful in aiding students' learning of RS as shown in students' improved performance on RS assignments and their greater understanding of the three components of RS (form, meaning, and use). The study reinstated the benefits of the functional approaches to translation on students' language learning. These approaches promoted students' interest in translation and shifted their perspectives on translation.

## Implications

Findings from this research showed that functional approaches to translation improved students' comprehension of RS's forms and gave them a stronger understanding of the meaning and use of this grammar point. Given the demonstrated advantages of functional approaches to translation in this study, teachers may use them in teaching grammatical points. Students should be given more chances to employ translation and make the connections between their translations and everyday situations or conversations to improve their language learning. In order to fully utilize the effectiveness that these approaches can bring to the language teaching and learning process, it is recommended that teachers in future classes should use more examples and contextual figures cited from communicative resources or materials related to functional approaches to translation to enable students to learn grammar structures frequently used in real-world communication. Given these approaches' benefits, educational policymakers and schools may raise teachers' perceptions of them and plan to implement them in the classroom to teach grammar and other language skills. It is expected that language learning would be fruitful if functional approaches to translation are used as a supportive tool in language teaching and learning.

## Recommendations for Future Research

This study calls for more in-depth investigations on the application and effectiveness of functional approaches to translation in teaching and learning language. To thoroughly assess the value of these approaches, future research is needed to investigate their effect in teaching various aspects of the language to different types of students.

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# Integration Of Active Learning Into British Culture Teaching

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## ABSTRACT

The study aims to investigate students' perception of their teacher's use of active learning in teaching British culture, the reality of integrating active learning into British Culture (BC) classes, and the benefits of doing so at The University of Danang-University of Foreign Language Studies (UD-UFLS). Data were collected from 92 questionnaires and the analysis of the in-depth interviews conducted with five student informants and observations of three BC lessons in total. The findings revealed that most of the participants know about the Active Learning (AL) and have applied AL activities in their presentation of the flipped BC lessons such as peer teaching, group work discussion, and debating. Also, the result showed that the procedure of a typical BC lesson consists of 7 steps with Ss as the central figure of the lesson, and each step was integrated with AL activities. From the research findings some implications to facilitate the teaching and learning of BC with AL integration were also suggested.

**Keywords:** British culture, Integration, Active Learning, Student-centered education, Knowledge transmitters

## 1. Introduction

In Vietnamese universities, especially UD-UFLS, the British culture is a crucial course in the training curriculum for the Bachelor of English Language and Bachelor of English Language Teaching. Effectively transferring cultural knowledge to students is challenging, though, as many people conventionally believed that learners' roles were passive recipients of knowledge (Aggarwal, 2006). On the other hand, when students participate in the process of generating their own information, they can learn much better. For these reasons, with an aim to examining UD-UFLS students' perception of their teacher's use of AL activities in teaching BC, the reality of integrating AL into BC flipped classes at UD-UFLS, and the procedure of implementing a BC lesson with the integration of AL activities to offer some recommendations for improving the integration of AL in the BC classes, we conducted this study. The findings are expected to answer the following questions:

- (1). What is the student's perception of the integration of AL into BC teaching?
- (2). What are some AL activities designed and conducted in the BC flipped lessons by students?
- (3). How is a BC lesson with AL integration implemented in the classroom?

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. A review of previous studies related to the research

Up to now, there have been many studies on the application of AL in education. In their work, Brown and Eison (1991) outlined the benefits of incorporating AL, explored adjustments to traditional lecture formats, and highlighted potential obstacles to implementing AL. Graffam (2007) proposed seven basic steps for adapting parts of medical lectures. The author suggested that engagement and AL pedagogies alter the nature of learning while also boosting knowledge acquisition and memory capacities. In the Vietnamese context, Doan Thi Truc Linh and Nguyen Van Cuong (2013) published a paper on various advanced teaching approaches that assist engineering students with AL. The authors hypothesized that these new ways of teaching may actively engage students in learning activities based on lecturers' organization and instruction. Huynh Thi Loc (2022) explored teachers' perspectives of applying AL strategies to teaching English speaking to sixth and seventh graders in Da Nang City. The results showed that the participants

had gotten a lot of benefits in their teaching such as inspiring students' creative thinking, fostering real-world problem solving, building teamwork, and, most crucially, enhancing students' engagement. Overall, the studies just reviewed mostly focused on practice-based subjects rather than on the possibility of integrating AL into teaching theory-based subjects like BC, more specifically, the integration AL into teaching the BC lessons in the form of flipped classes.

## **2.2. Some theoretical concepts**

### **2.1.1. Active Learning**

AL is a broad concept, referring to any approach of instruction that enables students to take responsibility for their own learning (Ho, 2015). Bonwell & Eison (1991) introduced AL as a method of learning in which students are actively or experientially involved in the learning process through higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation and where there are different levels of AL, depending on student involvement.

### **2.1.2. Characteristics of Active Learning**

According to Bonwell, AL is of the following characteristics (1991, p. 19):

- a. Students are involved in more than listening. That is, beside listening they still have to get engaged through thinking, and interacting with their classmates and course material.
- b. Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing students' skills.
- c. Students are involved in higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).
- d. Students are engaged in activities. These activities might be reading, discussing, writing, brainstorming, summarizing, critiquing, presenting, debating, and mindmapping.
- e. Greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own attitudes, values.

### **2.1.3. Strategies Promoting Active Learning**

*Computer-based learning* relies on computer technology to facilitate learning experiences, including using online databases, simulations, games, quizzes, and other types of digitally interactive activities.

*Cooperative learning* is a pedagogical practice enhancing academic achievement and creating opportunities for students to interact academically and socially with others to accomplish shared goals (Gillies & Boyle, 2010).

*Debates* range from the formal presentation with turns between support and rebuttal teams to less formal presentations where arguments for both sides are discussed (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

*Peer teaching* is a collaborative and cooperative teaching and learning strategy. In peer-teaching activities, students take charge of the tutorial class instead of the lecturer. They are divided into groups of three or four and each group takes charge of a tutorial class (Stigmar, 2016).

*Flipped learning* requires an online platform via which materials are delivered, and some home searching. These are followed by in-class interaction between lecturers and students, or students and students. Finally, post-class activities are implemented for feedback and conclusion (Zhai et al., 2017).

### **2.1.4. Description of British Culture Course at the Da Nang University-University of Foreign Language Studies**

In UD-UFLS, BC is designed to provide third year students of the English Language programme or the second year students of the English Language Teaching programme with the general introduction to Britain, British people and language, economy, history, government, political system, education, religion, family life, food, houses, media, sports, music, festivals and public holidays in Britain. The course helps students to have a closer approach to life in Britain through class discussions, presentations, video showing, questions, exercises and culture day activities. Hence, students' cultural awareness, their reading comprehension skills and learning of topic related vocabularies will be strengthened.

### **2.1.5. The approach to teaching British Culture at UD-UFLS**

Conventionally, teaching this subject according to the interactive model Initiation - Response - Feedback (Ur, 1996, p.227) with the teacher as the initiative role appears ineffective regardless of the teacher's careful preparation for the lessons. Nowadays, there are many teaching and learning approaches to promote learner involvement and transfer the role from the teacher to the learners in classrooms such as AL, flipped learning,... Although these are thought to be for teaching language skills, when applied to teaching theoretical subjects, especially BC they still show effectiveness. Motivated by this idea, the researcher, also

the teacher of BC, integrated AL into the lesson in the form of a flipped class, with students' presentation being the main AL activity. The teacher's role as the central figure in the lesson has been transferred to the students. Thus, it can be said that the BC lesson at UD-UFLS was conducted with a teaching method which is a hybrid of AL and flipped learning.

### **3. Research design**

#### **3.1. Research approaches**

This study combined both qualitative and quantitative approaches. According to Creswell (2003), these approaches were useful for capturing the best of qualitative and quantitative data; moreover, it can avoid the limitation of each single approach. The quantitative approach aimed to collect the numerical data which was then analyzed statistically to find out participants' perception of the reality of teaching BC lessons in the form of the flipped ones at UD-UFLS with the AL integration. Regarding the qualitative approach, interviews were implemented with five interviewees randomly chosen from the questionnaire informants for clarification of some information revealed from the questionnaire analysis. Moreover, three BC classes were observed to confirm the AL activities students used in their presentations and describe the procedure of teaching a BC lesson in a flipped AL-integrated classroom.

#### **3.2. Research instrumentation**

The questionnaire, the interview and observation were used for collecting data. The *questionnaire* was used to collect learners' general perceptions of integration of AL into BC teaching. It consists of three parts. The first part (question 1 to question 5) investigated students' academic year, faculty, and their experience with AL in their learning journey. The second part (question 6 to question 9) examined students' understanding of AL and its characteristics, as well as their perception of the concept and its impact on their BC learning. The collected data were used to answer the first research question. The third part (question 10) discovered the AL activities that students have applied in their BC course, and it was intended to answer the second research question. The *interview* provided opportunities for explanation of questionnaire findings about students' experience with AL in the BC course. The *observation* included watching and analyzing 3 video clips of 3 BC flipped lessons recorded by the co-researcher to get qualitative data for confirming information relating to AL activities used by students in the flipped classroom and the description of lesson procedure.

#### **3.3. Reliability and validity of the instruments**

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, all questionnaire items were carefully designed and proof-read by two English teachers at UD-UFLS. Then, it was piloted with five student participants randomly chosen among the population. For the validity, the instructions and questionnaire items were delivered in Vietnamese. The interviews were also conducted in Vietnamese so that the questionnaire informants and interviewees can understand the contents clearly. The BC lessons were observed and recorded for later analysis of its procedure.

#### **3.4. Population, participants, and sampling**

The study was implemented in four classes taught by the researcher in academic year 2023-2024 including 2 classes of third-year English major students, and 2 classes of second-year students majoring in English Language Teaching. At UD-UFLS, English major students attend a BC course in term 5, whereas English Language Teaching major students learn the Course in term 4. Therefore, their English proficiency level is not so different. The total participants are 92 (45 English Language Teaching majored students and 47 English Language majored students). Because this population is not so large, the author decided to choose the whole population as participants of this study.

Table 1: Participants of the study

Faculty	Gender		%
	Male	Female	
English Language		42	45.7
	5		5.4
English Language Teaching		42	45.7
	3		3.2
Total	92		100

According to statistics from the Department of Academic Affairs of UD-UFLS, there were 92 students registered for the Course in the academic year 2023-2024. The researchers took the entire samples with the total population sampling. The steps were as follows. First, the researchers make the name lists of student participants in UD-UFLS based on the information provided by the Department of Academic Affairs. Second, they deliver the questionnaires in the google form to all above mentioned students. Fortunately, all completed the questionnaire. The results were 92 samples ( $n = 92$ ).

### 3.5. Data collection

To begin, Google Form questionnaires were delivered to 92 students in four BC classes at UD-UFLS to collect their perception of the integration of AL into the flipped BC classroom and AL activities performed. Next, the author carried out individual interviews with five students randomly chosen to clarify the information gathered from the questionnaires. Three BC lessons were recorded for later observation. Finally, the questionnaire results were discussed, and the interview results from teachers and the observation result was generalized into the BC class teaching procedure.

### 3.6. Data analysis

In terms of the quantitative analysis, answers to closed-ended questionnaires were counted for percentage calculations. The data were shown through tables or figure illustrations for discussion.

The interviews and observations were conducted for qualitative data analysis. Note taking techniques were employed to assist the analysis process. The data from the interviews were then examined and evaluated. The data from observation were synthesized. Since qualitative data analysis was a very individualized process, the analysis was done from the perspective and experience of the researchers. .

## 4. Findings and discussion

### 4.1. What is the student's perception of the integration of active learning into BC teaching?

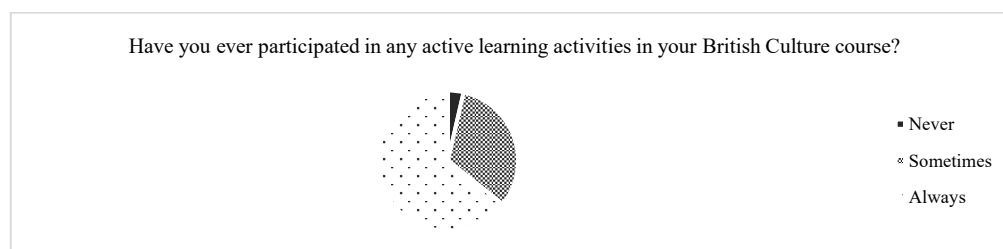


Figure 1: Students' participation in AL activities in BC classroom

Figure 1 highlights active participation in Active Learning (AL) activities within the British Culture course. A very low percentage (2.6%) reported never participating, while a significant majority (46.6%) participated in all activities. However, a notable portion (23.3%) did not participate in some AL activities.



When questioned, student B explained: *“Our British Culture course used a flipped classroom approach where students gave presentations in groups. These presentations were part of our overall grade. Since we were classmates, I felt motivated to participate in their activities to help make the presentations more engaging.”*

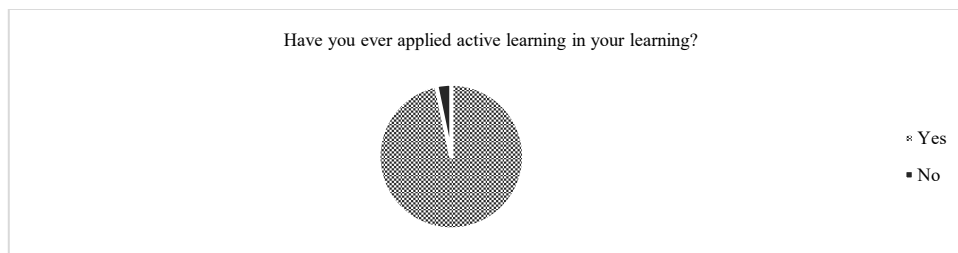


Figure 2: Students' experience with AL

Apparently, AL had long been a part of students' learning journey, with a great percentage of 96.7% being positive answers. In the interview with student A, she shared: *“In the BC lessons, there are a lot of AL activities. Activities like playing Kahoot games, doing quizzes after presentations are of great help to make our performances better. Furthermore, I think using them improves my skills as well, as they give me chances to practice what I have learnt.”*

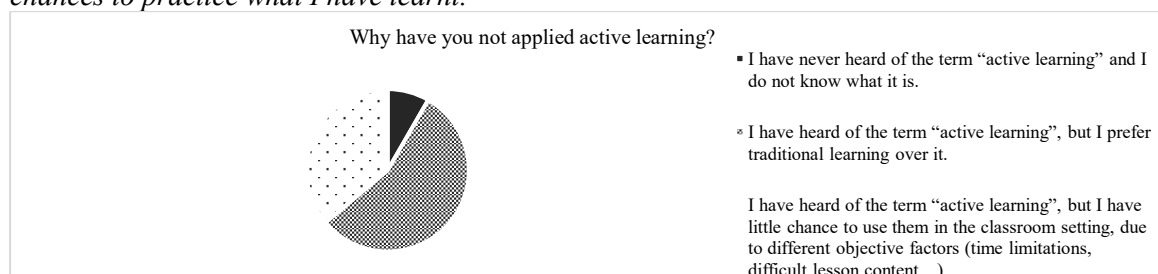


Figure 3: Reasons why students had not applied AL

The majority of students who had never used AL strategies before attributed their reason to the preference over traditional learning (60%). It is followed by objective factors such as time limitations, or difficult lesson content, with 32.5% of the total responses. 7.5% of the polled students had never heard of the term and did not know what it was. When interviewed about the positive and negative points of AL and traditional learning, many students referred to the difference in the way they act in class. Students who preferred the latter showed bias to the passive learning style, which means they involved little effort in the classroom, and they were comfortable with the one-way passing down of new knowledge as they were afraid to apply what was learnt immediately without any preparation. In contrast, those who favored AL claimed that it made the lesson more interesting, and that they liked to move around in the classroom and it served as their learning motivation.

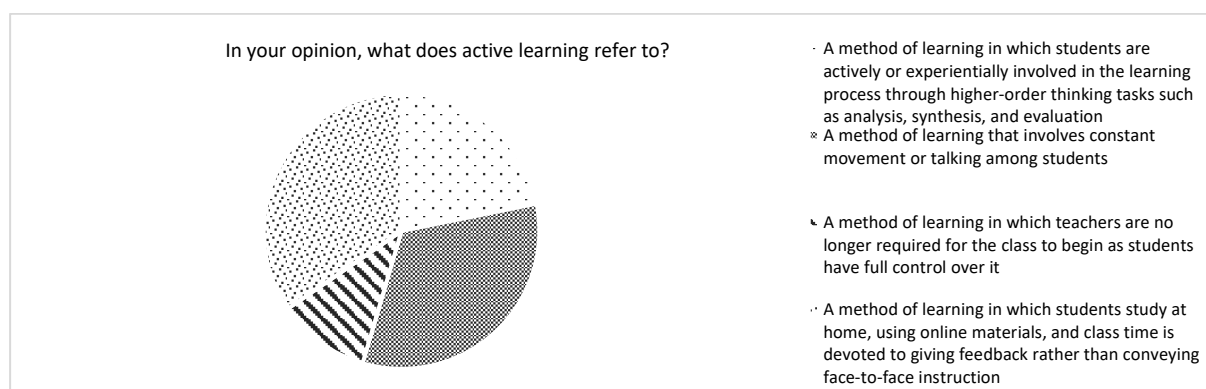


Figure 4: Students' understanding of AL definition

The majority of students (75%) accurately understood the term AL. 17,9% of students mistook AL definition with that of flipped classrooms, and only 7,1% interpreted AL as mere constant movement around the class. Gladly, no participant eliminated the role of teachers in AL, meaning students had a clear perception that AL is just a shift in classroom role in terms of knowledge delivery, yet it maintains the importance of instructors in directing and supporting students in their learning process. Among the surveyed students, 75% correctly grasped the concept of AL. 17,9% of students mistook AL definition with that of flipped classrooms, and only 7,1% interpreted AL as mere constant movement around the class. Gladly, none of the participants disregarded the role of teachers in AL. This indicates that students recognize AL as a shift in classroom dynamics regarding knowledge delivery while still valuing instructors' guidance and support.

Table 2: Students' understanding of AL characteristics

<b>AL characteristics</b>	<b>%</b>
Students are involved in more than listening.	75
Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing students' skills.	<b>35.7</b>
Students are involved in higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).	<b>82.1</b>
Greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own attitudes, values.	53.6
Students are engaged in activities.	78.6

Among the five investigated AL characteristics, higher-order thinking involvement like analysis, synthesis, evaluation was the most recognized (82,1%), while decreased emphasis on knowledge transfer and greater emphasis on students' skill development was the least noticed (35.7%). The encouragement for pupils to participate in classroom activities received 78.6% of the overall answer. While 75% of participants knew that AL engaged students in more than just listening in class, slightly more than half of students could detect that AL placed a strong emphasis on their attitudes and values. Overall, from what has been gained, students had a good general understanding of AL, both its definition and characteristics. Notions like AL learning promotes active participation in the classroom while maintaining the importance of teachers' role were well understood. However, it seems students didn't fully grasp the deeper benefits of AL, such as its potential to positively influence their attitudes and values. In other words, they might not understand the long-term impact AL can have beyond just participating in class activities.

Table 3: Impacts of the integration of AL into the BC course on students' learning of the Course

	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<b>POSITIVE</b>				
The integration of AL in the BC course makes the lessons more interesting.	1	5	<b>3.82</b>	0.91
The integration of AL serves as the motivation for students to attend class.	1	5	4.07	0.81
The integration of AL introduces to students more effective ways to absorb knowledge.	1	5	<b>4.22</b>	0.69
AL activities help students to better grasp	1	5	3.89	0.66

the knowledge in the course.				
<b>NEGATIVE</b>				
The integration of AL may create discomfort and anxiety for students who are not used to it.	1	5	3.76	<b>1.10</b>
The integration of AL takes more preparation time than the traditional one.	1	5	<b>4.39</b>	0.74
The integration of AL may make students underestimate the role of teachers in class.	1	5	<b>3.07</b>	<b>1.03</b>
The success of AL activities depends on many uncontrollable factors like student attendance, classroom dynamics, etc.	1	5	3.96	0.63

Table 3 depicts students' perceptions of how AL integration influences their learning of the British Culture course. Overall, it is clear that students agreed with all statements concerning beneficial effects ( $3.41 < \text{Mean, Std. Deviation} < 1$ ), however this cannot be confirmed for all researched negative impacts. The biggest advantage students reported from AL was exposure to new ways of learning, at 4.22. This was followed by a perceived increase in creativity (4.10) and feeling more motivated to attend class (4.07). Interestingly, the statement about motivation was the only one where no student strongly disagreed. This suggests that even if students had varying opinions, they generally viewed AL's impact on motivation positively. Changes in interestingness of lessons were the least perceived, with a mean of 3.82.

Except for concern about the underestimated role of teachers which received a mean below the agreement level ( $\text{Mean} < 3.41$ ), those who participated expressed agreement to the remaining statements. The majority of students expressed concern about the additional preparation time required compared to traditional learning (4.39). Stress over content coverage was also a disadvantage of AL integration, and along with anxiety of uncontrollable aspects that are unavoidable in an AL classroom, these were the two second most frightening problems students encountered.

Significantly mixed answers were reported for statements on whether students new to AL might feel anxious or uncomfortable, and whether teachers might become less important ( $\text{Std. Deviation} > 1$ ). This shows students' varying opinions regarding the matter. Student C offered some interesting thoughts in his interview: *"It is really hard to say. I think it may depend on students' adapting ability as well. In the 4.0 era and in the UFLS education context, one-way knowledge exchange seems to be outdated, and the institution is directing their learners towards a more learner-centered way of learning. That is why I think if they cannot adapt themselves to this context, all the mentioned problems are likely to happen, not just limited to AL classrooms as British Culture."*

#### ***4.2. What are some AL activities designed and conducted in the British Culture lessons by students?***

Table 4: Students' AL activities in the BC lessons

<b>AL learning activities used</b>	<b>%</b>
Using digital materials as images, videos to design and present instructions	<b>96.4</b>
Using online quizzes	50
Using collaborative games	42.9

AL learning activities used	%
Debating	86.4
Group work discussion	89.3
Peer teaching	53.6
Flipped learning	74.1

Table 4 shows how students perceived their own use of AL activities in the flipped BC class. According to questionnaire results, digital materials to present ideas were claimed to be used by most students, as it accounted for a high percentage of 96.4%. It is then followed by group work discussion, at 89.3%, and debating, at 86.4%. 74.1% of students responded to corporate flipped learning in their course, while interestingly, only 53.6% of students claimed to have employed peer teaching in their course. Nevertheless, data from observations revealed several new insights. As the course was directed in a hybrid approach between AL and flipped classroom, flipped learning and peer teaching were the two highest employed in the recordings. Reasons may vary, yet either the lack of consciousness when applying, or the unfamiliarity with the terms may lead to these results. For example, in this British Culture course, students presented information they prepared at home to their classmates. While this is actually considered peer teaching, many students might have simply viewed it as an assignment and not counted it as a peer teaching activity. The use of online quizzes and collaborative games were not highly rated by students according to questionnaires, yet in reality, they served as powerful tools for students' presentations. This could be because they mostly used the same tools like Kahoot and Quizizz, making the experience repetitive and leading to lower survey ratings.

#### 4.3. How is a British Culture lesson with AL integration implemented in the classroom?

Observing and analyzing videos of three British lessons the researcher could synthesize the class procedures as follows:

**(1) Lead-in:** Teacher (T) introduces some specific terms related to the contents of the lesson or asks students (Ss) some questions to elicit the main topic of the lesson.

**(2) Role transfer:** T introduces the Unit and the group of Ss in charge of presenting the sections assigned. With this, the flipped classroom is established, and the focus of the lesson is transferred from the T to the Ss.

**(3) Group presentation:** Individual Ss implement the section assigned to them by the group leader in turn. Student presenters can use various AL activities predetermined in their group preparation for the plan of their session such as quizzes, mindmapping, problem solving, etc...



Figure 4: Individual presentation



Figure 5: Mind mapping technique used in presentation

**(4) Think & Share:** After each subsection presentation, there is a pause for a debate.

- Student audience think about the content just presented and ask questions or share ideas related to each presentation just performed by raising a big name tag.

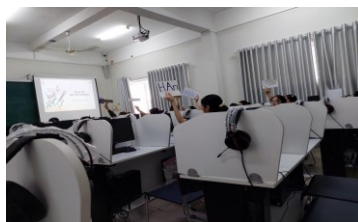


Figure 6: Students' readiness for debates

- The presenter answers the questions or shares ideas.

- Group share: If the presenter cannot answer the questions, other members of his/her group will help if they know the answer or solutions. In case there is nobody raising their hand, the teacher will invite some to be sure that there is no other debate before the next mini-presentation occurs.

**(5) T's explanation:** T helps to answer the questions that the presenter cannot and gives more ideas to clarify the problems being discussed

**(6) Mini lecture:** T briefly summarizes the main contents of the session for consolidation.

**(7) Home task:**

- T reminds Ss of the topic Ss and the group in charge of the next lesson.

- T reminds Ss of the online task related to the content of the lesson they have just learned regarding the task type, time allotted and the submission deadline.

## 5. Conclusion and implications

### 5.1. Conclusion

This study has examined the integration of AL learning into the BC flipped-classroom lessons, focusing on the students' perception, utilized AL activities during students' presentations and the lesson implementation procedure. Results show that most students had a good understanding of AL, its characteristics and potential advantages and disadvantages. However, long-term impacts of AL required further attention. Most of the participants have applied AL activities in their presentation such as peer teaching, group discussion, and debating. These were confirmed by the quantitative findings extracted from the participants' responses to the questionnaires delivered to them. Observing 3 videos of 3 BC lessons, the researcher can summarize the procedure of each lesson which consists of 7 concrete steps with Ss as the central figure of the lesson. Within each step the AL activities were integrated into it.

### 5.2. Implications

The findings of the study suggest the following implications to facilitate the teaching and learning of BC with AL integration. First, students should be provided with the knowledge of AL and flipped learning at the beginning of the BC course to ensure they clearly understand the class design and expectations. Second, online platforms should be leveraged for interactive exercises, simulations, or gamified learning experiences related to the upcoming class topic. Third, the classroom seat arrangement should be flexible to make it easy for organizing AL activities. Finally, assessments should evaluate not just the final product but also the process of learning through group work, peer review, and active participation in discussions. Besides traditional writing exams, teachers should apply other assessment forms such as projects, reflective journals... to mobilize students' ability to apply what has been learnt.

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# Pre-Service Primary Teachers' Perspectives on Formative Assessment's Role in Fostering Academic Self-Efficacy

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## ABSTRACT

Academic self-efficacy, generally defined as students' beliefs in their capabilities to succeed at designated learning tasks, is widely recognized as a pivotal factor influencing academic performance, motivation, and social-emotional development. While nurturing self-efficacy is crucial, assessing and developing it can be challenging, especially in primary education settings. Formative assessment practices have been advocated as an effective approach for enhancing students' academic self-efficacy in primary classrooms. However, the extent to which pre-service primary teachers understand this concept and perceive formative assessment's role in fostering self-efficacy remains unexplored. This study investigates how pre-service primary teachers conceptualize academic self-efficacy and their perspectives on the potential role of formative assessment in nurturing it. The data, collected through questionnaires and interviews, revealed a discrepancy between participants' self-reported high understanding of academic self-efficacy and their interpretations, which often aligned with observable confidence behaviours rather than a deeper comprehension of the construct. Moreover, although participants demonstrated a strong belief in the importance of cultivating academic self-efficacy, they exhibited difficulties in effectively implementing formative assessment techniques to enhance students' self-efficacy beliefs. These findings underscore the need for targeted training to deepen pre-service teachers' understanding of the multidimensional nature of academic self-efficacy and its pivotal role in the learning process. Furthermore, providing guidance on leveraging the potential of formative assessment to foster self-efficacy could better equip future educators to nurture this critical attribute in primary students, ultimately enhancing their academic and personal growth.

**Keywords:** Academic self-efficacy, Formative assessment, Primary education

## 1. Introduction

For the past three decades, self-efficacy has been a focus of research, with particular emphasis on how teachers can foster learning environments that enhance students' psychological well-being and, in turn, optimize their academic outcomes (Cheng, 2020). Rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory, academic self-efficacy (ASE) reflects a student's belief in their ability to execute tasks and achieve goals at designated levels (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2022). ASE consistently emerges as a key factor positively correlated with academic performance (Affuso et al., 2023; Brown et al., 2016; Lu et al., 2022). Given its critical role, educators are challenged to find effective strategies to enhance ASE within their classrooms. In such pursuit, formative assessment offers a powerful avenue for teachers to directly influence and foster students' ASE because unlike summative assessments, which evaluate students' achievements at the end of a learning period, formative assessments are integrated throughout the learning process, providing continuous feedback that helps students recognize their strengths and areas for improvement. This ongoing feedback is instrumental in building students' confidence in their abilities and reinforcing their belief in potential success (Harris & Brown, 2018; Lu et al., 2022).

Recognizing these potential benefits, the ongoing educational reform in Vietnam, spanning grades 1 to 12, has placed a stronger emphasis on formative assessment, particularly at the primary level. By incorporating formative assessment practices into the classroom more often and strategically, teachers can create supportive environments where students feel valued and understood, their progress is acknowledged, and they are encouraged to take ownership of their learning journey. This approach nurtures students' psychological well-being, empowering them to engage actively in their studies and consequently increasing the likelihood of higher academic performance.

However, despite the numerous benefits of formative assessment, its effective implementation presents challenges. Teachers need to possess a comprehensive understanding of both the assessment techniques and the underlying principles of ASE to create a supportive learning environment. This requirement highlights a critical gap in the current literature on ASE and formative assessment, as there is limited understanding of how pre-service primary teachers perceive the concept of ASE and their use of formative assessment in the classroom to enhance students' self-efficacy. Exploring these perceptions is particularly crucial because pre-service teachers are at a critical juncture where their beliefs, knowledge, and practices are being shaped. By examining their understanding of ASE and formative assessment, we can identify potential knowledge gaps and highlight areas where teacher education programs can provide more targeted support, ensuring that future educators are well-equipped to implement these valuable practices effectively in their classrooms.

## **2. Literature review**

Academic self-efficacy (ASE) is a crucial construct in educational psychology, referring to a student's belief in their ability to successfully perform academic tasks (Bandura, 1997). It influences motivation, learning strategies, and academic achievement (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). Understanding ASE and its enhancement is vital for educators aiming to improve student outcomes.

### **2.1. Academic self efficacy (ASE) and its sources**

ASE is task-specific and affects how students approach challenges, persist in the face of difficulties, and recover from setbacks (Zimmerman, 2000). Bandura (1997) identified four primary sources that shape ASE:

- (1) *Mastery experiences*: These are the most influential source of ASE. When students succeed in tasks through effort and perseverance, they develop a strong sense of efficacy
- (2) *Vicarious experiences*: Observing peers successfully perform tasks can enhance an individual's self-efficacy. When students see others similar to themselves succeed, they infer that they too possess the capabilities to achieve similar success, especially if they observe the strategies used by their peers.
- (3) *Verbal persuasion*: Encouragement and positive or constructive feedback from teachers and peers can strengthen a student's belief in their abilities.
- (4) *Physiological and emotional states*: Students' interpretations of their emotional and physiological responses can impact their self-efficacy. Positive emotions like excitement can enhance efficacy beliefs, while stress and anxiety may undermine them.

### **2.2. Formative assessment in education**

Formative assessment (FA) is an ongoing process that involves gathering and interpreting evidence of student learning to inform teaching and provide feedback (Black & Wiliam, 2009). FA is integral to effective instruction, as it helps teachers identify student needs and adjust instruction accordingly (Heritage, 2007). In language education, FA practices include portfolios, journals, conferences, observations, and self and peer assessments (Brown, 2004)

FA emphasizes student involvement in the learning process, promoting self-regulation and metacognition (Andrade & Heritage, 2017)). By providing timely and specific feedback, FA helps students understand their progress toward learning goals and identify areas for improvement (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). This collaborative approach aligns with the principles of assessment for learning, where assessment serves as a tool to enhance learning rather than merely evaluate it (Sadler, 1989).

### **2.3. Linking formative assessment to academic self-efficacy**

Integrating FA practices can enhance ASE by directly addressing its four sources. By aligning FA strategies with these sources, educators can create a supportive learning environment that fosters confidence and motivation.

Firstly, *mastery experiences* are promoted through FA by providing students with opportunities to succeed and recognize their progress. For example, using portfolios allows students to reflect on their cumulative work, seeing tangible evidence of their growth over time (Brookhart, 2017).



Secondly, *vicarious experiences* are facilitated through collaborative FA practices like peer assessment and group work. When students engage in peer assessment, they observe classmates' strategies and successes, which can inspire them and provide models for their own learning (Topping, 2010).

Thirdly, *verbal persuasion* is integral to FA, as teachers provide constructive feedback and encouragement. One-on-one conferences offer personalized support, allowing teachers to acknowledge students' efforts and guide them toward improvement (Shute, 2008).

Lastly, addressing *physiological and emotional states* is possible through FA by creating a classroom environment that reduces anxiety and promotes well-being. By offering clear expectations and supportive feedback, teachers can alleviate stress associated with assessments (Clark, 2012). Observations enable teachers to identify and respond to students' emotional needs, fostering a positive atmosphere conducive to learning.

Through these mechanisms, FA not only supports academic development but also enhances ASE. As students' self-efficacy increases, they are more likely to engage deeply with learning tasks, persist in the face of challenges, and achieve higher academic outcomes (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016). This creates a positive cycle where increased ASE leads to better performance, which in turn further reinforces self-efficacy. Figure 1 illustrates this cyclical relationship between formative assessment practices and academic self-efficacy.

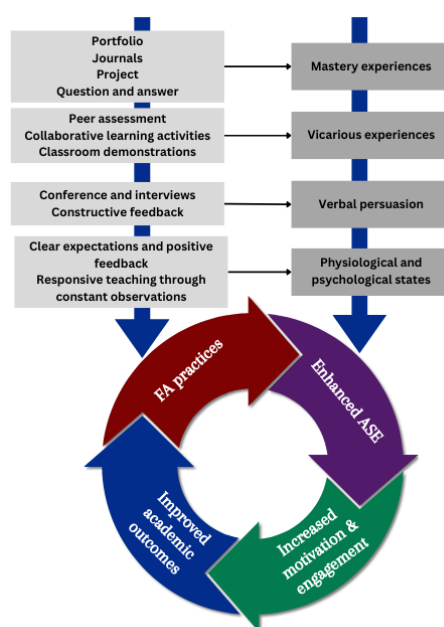


Figure 1: Theoretical framework linking FA strategies to the four sources of ASE

The figure depicts how specific FA strategies correspond to Bandura's four sources of ASE. It shows the cyclical process where FA enhances self-efficacy, leading to increased motivation and improved academic outcomes, which in turn reinforce self-efficacy.

In summary, ASE is a critical factor influencing student learning and achievement. FA offers practical strategies to enhance ASE by fostering mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and managing physiological and emotional states. By thoughtfully integrating FA practices, teachers can create a dynamic and supportive learning environment that not only improves academic outcomes but also fosters students' belief in their abilities, setting the stage for lifelong learning and success.

### 3. Research questions

Despite the recognized importance of ASE and formative assessment, research exploring how pre-service teachers understand and apply these concepts in their classrooms remains limited. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating two key questions:

- (1) How do pre-service primary English teachers perceive and understand the concepts of academic self-efficacy and formative assessment?
- (2) In what ways do pre-service primary English teachers utilize formative assessment strategies to enhance students' academic self-efficacy?

#### **4. Method**

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore pre-service primary English teachers' perceptions of academic self-efficacy (ASE) and formative assessment (FA), as well as their experiences using FA strategies to enhance students' ASE during their teaching practicum. This approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of participants' subjective experiences and beliefs (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

##### ***4.1. Participants***

The participants were the entire cohort of 12 final-year undergraduate students enrolled in a primary English teaching program at a public university in Vietnam. All participants were female, aged between 22 and 23 years old. Eight had prior experience as tutors or teaching assistants at English language centers. Their similar backgrounds provided a homogeneous sample for qualitative inquiry (Patton, 2014). All participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, with each assigned an alphanumeric code (e.g., PT1, PT2).

##### ***4.2. Data collection instruments***

Data were collected using open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, both of which are qualitative methods designed to elicit rich, detailed responses.

###### *Open-ended questionnaires*

Distributed in the fourth week of the eight-week teaching practicum, the questionnaire comprised 17 items designed to elicit participants' understanding of ASE and FA, their perceptions of how FA strategies correspond to Bandura's (1997) four sources of ASE, and their experiences implementing these strategies during their practicum. While demographic questions were included for context, the focus was on open-ended questions that allowed participants to express their thoughts and experiences in their own words. Sample questions included:

- "In your own words, express your understanding of academic self-efficacy."
- "What formative assessment strategies do you often use in your class?"
- "Do you think your use of formative assessment affects your students' academic self-efficacy? If yes, how?"

###### *Semi-structured interviews*

In the final two weeks of the practicum, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight participants who agreed to continue in the study. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes and explored participants' actual use of FA strategies linked to the four sources of ASE and their perceptions of the impact on students' self-efficacy. Sample interview questions included:

- "Can you describe specific formative assessment strategies you used in your classroom?"
- "Did you observe any changes in student behaviour or motivation after implementing these strategies?"

##### ***4.3. Data analysis***

Data from questionnaires and interviews were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved transcribing responses, generating initial codes based on key concepts (e.g., mastery experiences, verbal persuasion), and organizing these into coherent themes. The analysis was both deductive, guided by Bandura's sources of ASE, and inductive, allowing for new themes to emerge. The final themes were reviewed and refined to ensure consistency, and representative quotes were included to support the findings while maintaining anonymity.

## 5. Findings

### 5.1. Pre-service teachers' perceptions of academic self-efficacy and formative assessment

#### *Understanding of academic self-efficacy*

The pre-service teachers in this study generally rated their familiarity with academic self-efficacy (ASE) as “good” (10 out of 12) or “very good,” (1 out of 12) indicating confidence in their understanding of the concept. However, their descriptions revealed a varied and somewhat limited grasp of ASE’s full scope.

Many participants conceptualized ASE primarily as a belief in one’s learning abilities and capacities to perform well academically. For instance, PT1 defined ASE as “the abilities to perform well in studies,” and PT7 described it as “the belief in one’s capacities, knowledge, and potentials to achieve high academic results.” This understanding aligns with Bandura’s (1997) definition of self-efficacy as an individual’s belief in their ability to organize and execute actions required to manage prospective situations.

However, the participants’ emphasis on observable behaviours, such as willingness to participate in class discussions and make presentations (PT1, PT8), suggests a surface-level appreciation of ASE. They appear to associate high ASE with classroom engagement on the surface, which does not encompass the full range of self-efficacy’s influence on learning processes. According to Usher and Pajares (2008), while behavioural indicators can reflect self-efficacy, they are outcomes of underlying cognitive and motivational processes.

Notably, some participants recognized aspects of self-regulation and metacognition as components of ASE. PT9’s description of ASE as “the ability to assess one’s memory, comprehension, application, and creativity in using learned knowledge” indicates an awareness of the cognitive dimensions of self-efficacy. This aligns with Zimmerman’s (2000) emphasis on self-regulation as a critical component of self-efficacy, where learners actively monitor and adjust their behaviours to achieve learning goals.

However, the emotional and physiological aspects of ASE were less recognized among the participants. Only PT11 associated ASE with traits like “positive energy and an open mind,” reflecting resilience and optimism. The participants’ limited acknowledgment of this aspect suggests a gap in their understanding of how emotional factors influence students’ self-efficacy.

#### *Perceived impact of academic self-efficacy*

Most pre-service teachers believed that ASE positively affects academic performance, motivation, and effort. PT3 observed that students with high ASE “persist in the face of challenges,” and PT8 noted that such students “put in extra effort on challenging exercises.” This perspective aligns with Schunk and Pajares (2009), who asserted that students with high self-efficacy are more likely to embrace challenging tasks, employ effective learning strategies, and persist despite difficulties.

Although research has shown that ASE is closely linked to emotional regulation and social competencies (Pajares & Schunk, 2001), which are essential for holistic student development, only three participants saw limited effects of ASE on social and emotional skills. This reveals that while the pre-service teachers recognize the role of ASE in cognitive and behavioural domains, they may underestimate its impact on affective domains.

#### *Understanding of formative assessment*

All participants rated themselves as “very familiar” with FA. Most accurately identified FA as a tool for helping students track their progress and for assisting teachers in identifying areas for improvement. PT5 explained, “Formative assessment provides ongoing feedback that helps both teachers and students understand the learning process better.” This understanding reflects the core principles of FA as described by Black and Wiliam (2009), who emphasized the formative use of assessment to adjust teaching and learning activities.

However, when asked about the link between FA and ASE, participants expressed varied understandings. Some acknowledged that consistent feedback could enhance students’ self-awareness and confidence, potentially boosting ASE. PT6 stated, “feedback from formative assessment makes students more aware of their abilities, which can boost their confidence.” Nevertheless, many participants struggled to articulate a

clear connection between FA practices and the enhancement of ASE. This suggests a gap in their conceptual integration of how FA can be strategically employed to support the development of ASE.

The findings indicate that pre-service teachers possess a foundational understanding of ASE and FA but lack a comprehensive grasp of the full scope of these concepts. Their limited recognition of the emotional and physiological aspects of ASE and the nuanced ways in which FA can enhance self-efficacy highlights areas for improvement in teacher education programs.

## ***5.2. Utilization of formative assessment strategies to enhance academic self-efficacy***

### *Commonly used formative assessment strategies*

Participants reported frequently using questioning and feedback as FA strategies. All participants incorporated these techniques regularly in their teaching. PT4 shared, "I often use questioning during lessons to check understanding and keep students engaged." Eight participants also reported using exercises as formative assessments. PT7 mentioned, "I give short exercises to assess whether students grasp the lesson content."

Despite being familiar with strategies like peer and self-assessment, these were underutilized. PT3 admitted, "I know about peer assessment, but I don't think it's suitable for my students at this level." Several participants felt constrained by their role as pre-service teachers and the lack of authority to assign formal grades, which discouraged them from implementing certain FA activities like portfolios or reflective journals. PT8 explained, "Without official marking, students tend to neglect these activities."

When examining the implementation of FA strategies aligned with Bandura's (1997) four sources of ASE, several observations emerge:

### *Mastery experiences*

Participants aimed to provide tasks matching students' abilities to facilitate success, aligning with mastery experiences as a source of ASE. PT6 noted, "I design activities that are challenging but achievable so that students can feel a sense of accomplishment." PT8 recounted assisting a diligent student who struggled with a difficult exercise: "She believed that with a bit more effort, she could solve a tough exercise. I provided hints, and when she succeeded, she seemed more confident."

### *Vicarious experiences*

While peer assessment was rarely used, some participants incorporated collaborative activities that provided opportunities for vicarious experiences. PT1 highlighted using group work during games: "Students work together to write sentences using given words. Seeing their peers succeed motivates them to try harder."

PT5, who initially reported rarely using peer assessment, shared in the interview that she found it beneficial in her writing class: "Students provided feedback on each other's written work and earned reward points for their group. It boosted both their confidence and engagement."

### *Verbal persuasion*

Positive feedback was commonly used, though often in generic terms like "good job" or "well done." PT5 recognized the limitations of this approach, admitting, "I tend to give general praise because I'm not sure how to provide more detailed feedback that could boost their self-efficacy." PT4 emphasized the importance of encouragement: "I always tell my students they can do it, which I believe motivates them."

### *Physiological and emotional states*

Few participants addressed students' emotional well-being directly, indicating a gap in their practice. PT2 confessed, "Managing classroom procedures sometimes takes up all my attention, and I might overlook how students are feeling." PT11, however, noted, "Creating a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere is important, but it's challenging with limited time."

### *Challenges in FA implementation*

Participants faced several challenges in effectively utilizing FA to enhance ASE:

- Time constraints: Heavy workload and lesson preparation limited time for providing detailed feedback. PT3 expressed, "With so much to prepare, I find it hard to give individualized feedback to all students."
- Large class sizes: Difficulty in offering individualized attention in classes of approximately 35 students. PT3 added, "It's challenging to manage the class and focus on each student's needs."
- Lack of experience and skills: Uncertainty in delivering feedback effectively to enhance ASE. PT5 shared, "Even though we learned about providing constructive feedback, I still struggle to do it in practice."
- Perceived authority limitations: Hesitation to implement certain FA strategies without official authorization. PT1 stated, "As a pre-service teacher, I feel limited in what I can do, especially regarding assessments that aren't part of the official curriculum."

## 6. Discussion

### ***6.1. RQ 1: How do pre-service primary English teachers perceive and understand the concepts of academic self-efficacy and formative assessment?***

The pre-service teachers demonstrated an initial understanding of ASE, recognizing it as a belief in one's academic abilities and its importance for academic success. Their focus on confidence, participation, and observable behaviors aligns with existing literature, which notes that teachers often associate self-efficacy with student engagement and performance (Usher & Pajares, 2008). However, their limited recognition of emotional and physiological states as sources of ASE suggests a gap in their comprehension of the construct's full scope (Bandura, 1997).

While they acknowledged that ASE influences academic performance and motivation, few participants recognized its impact on social and emotional skills. This narrow perception overlooks research indicating that ASE is linked to emotional regulation and resilience (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). The lack of emphasis on these aspects may limit their ability to support students' holistic development.

Regarding FA, participants showed a solid understanding of its purpose in tracking progress and informing instruction. Their frequent use of questioning and feedback reflects common practices in formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 2009). However, their difficulty in articulating how FA directly impacts ASE indicates a disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical application. This mirrors findings by Heritage (2007) who emphasizes that teachers often need support in understanding how to use FA to enhance self-regulated learning.

### ***6.2. RQ 2: In what ways do pre-service primary English teachers utilize formative assessment strategies to enhance students' academic self-efficacy?***

The findings show that pre-service teachers applied formative assessment (FA) in various ways in their classrooms. Although not always conscious of their practices' impact on the four sources of academic self-efficacy (ASE), their actions corresponded to these sources.

#### *Mastery experiences*

By matching tasks to students' abilities, pre-service teachers facilitated mastery experiences, crucial for building self-efficacy (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). For example, PT8 assisted a student with a challenging exercise, reinforcing the student's belief in their capabilities. However, the lack of differentiated instruction may have limited mastery opportunities for higher-achieving students who might not find the tasks sufficiently challenging (Vygotsky, 1978).

#### *Vicarious experiences*

Limited use of peer assessment reduced opportunities for vicarious learning, where students learn by observing peers (Topping, 2010). This underutilization may reflect cultural preferences for teacher-centered approaches, as observed by Lee and Coniam (2013) in Hong Kong classrooms. Such cultural factors may influence teachers' willingness to adopt learner-centered FA strategies that promote vicarious experiences and self-regulation.

### *Verbal persuasion*

While participants frequently used positive feedback, the generic nature of their praise may not effectively enhance self-efficacy. Specific and constructive feedback is more impactful, as it provides students with clear guidance on their performance and how to improve (Shute, 2008). Brookhart (2017) asserts that effective feedback should be descriptive and focused on the task rather than the individual, helping students understand their progress and how to achieve their goals.

### *Physiological and emotional states*

The minimal attention to students' emotional well-being indicates a need for greater awareness of how physiological and emotional states influence self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Clark (2012) highlights that addressing emotional factors is essential for fostering a supportive learning environment conducive to building self-efficacy. Participants admitted that classroom management demands often overshadowed attending to students' emotional needs, suggesting they require strategies to balance these responsibilities.

In terms of the challenges faced by the pre-service teachers, time constraints, large class sizes, and lack of experience are common obstacles in educational settings (Ai et al., 2019).

### *Time constraints and classroom management*

Managing large classes with diverse needs requires efficient strategies. Participants reported difficulty in providing individualized feedback due to time limitations. This aligns with observation of Pham (2013) that rigid curricula and heavy workloads discourage flexible FA practices. Teacher education programs should equip pre-service teachers with time-management skills and techniques for effective classroom organization to maximize opportunities for formative assessment.

### *Lack of experience and skills in providing feedback*

Participants were uncertain in delivering detailed, constructive feedback to enhance ASE. Despite theoretical knowledge, applying these skills was challenging. This gap suggests that teacher education should include more practical training, such as role-playing and simulated teaching experiences, to develop proficiency in feedback delivery (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

### *Perceived authority limitations*

Feeling constrained by their status, pre-service teachers were hesitant to implement certain FA strategies. This highlights the importance of mentorship and support from supervising teachers during practicums. Encouraging collaboration and providing autonomy can empower them to experiment with diverse FA methods.

To address these challenges, teacher education programs should:

- enhance training on FA strategies: Provide explicit instruction on linking FA strategies to Bandura's four sources of ASE, including practical applications and real-life classroom scenarios.
- develop skills in emotional intelligence: Incorporate training on recognizing and addressing students' physiological and emotional states to enhance ASE.
- promote reflective practice: Encourage pre-service teachers to reflect on their experiences and challenges, facilitating deeper understanding and professional growth.
- Foster supportive practicum environments: Ensure that pre-service teachers receive adequate support and mentorship during their practicum to confidently apply FA strategies.

## **7. Conclusion**

This study reveals that pre-service primary English teachers possess a foundational theoretical understanding of academic self-efficacy (ASE) and formative assessment (FA), acknowledging their potential to enhance students' academic success. However, a significant gap exists between their theoretical knowledge and practical application in the classroom. While they employed FA techniques like questioning and feedback, they struggled to articulate how these strategies specifically influenced ASE, particularly in relation to Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy. Their limited use of deeper FA strategies, such as peer

and self-assessment, and minimal attention to students' emotional states suggest a narrow application of FA practices. These challenges likely stem from perceiving FA as a one-time activity rather than a continuous process, along with limited practical experience due to brief practicum placements. Consequently, they were unable to fully integrate FA practices that effectively enhance all aspects of ASE.

### ***Implications***

To bridge the gap between theory and practice, teacher education programs should provide explicit training on implementing FA strategies aligned with Bandura's four sources of ASE. Future educators need to be equipped not only to recognize ASE in students but also to actively nurture it through targeted FA practices. Training should emphasize the continuous nature of FA, focusing on essential skills such as: (1) creating supportive classroom environments that address students' physiological and emotional states; (2) instructing students on self-assessment and peer assessment to promote vicarious experiences and self-regulation; (3) delivering specific, constructive feedback to enhance mastery experiences and verbal persuasion; and (4) interpreting assessment evidence to identify learning gaps and adjusting instruction accordingly (Bandura, 1997; Heritage, 2007). Additionally, providing opportunities for reflective practice and mentorship during practicums can help pre-service teachers develop the confidence and competence to implement these strategies effectively.

### ***Limitations***

This study's findings are based on a small sample of 12 pre-service teachers, which may limit the extent to which the results can be generalized to larger populations. Future research involving larger and more diverse cohorts of participants is recommended to further validate and extend the findings.

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# The Short Form Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T-SF): Development of a Short-Form Version and Its Psychometric Properties

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## ABSTRACT

The study aimed to develop a short-form version of the Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T-SF) and evaluate its psychometric properties. The original ABI-T is a screening tool used to measure burnout levels in undergraduate students; however, its length can be a barrier to practical application in educational settings. The need for a more efficient tool inspired the development of a short-form version that retains the original's validity and reliability. The development process of the ABI-T-SF involved several phases, including item reduction through bivariate correlation analysis with a sample of Thai undergraduate students (n=236). Afterward, construct validity was evaluated through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure that the factor structure was consistent with the original ABI-T. Convergent validity was evaluated through correlation analysis with a stress screening questionnaire (ST-5). Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results revealed that the ABI-T-SF consisted of 18 items, capturing the four core dimensions of academic burnout as in the original: emotional instability, decreased cognitive function, lack of motivation, and exhaustion. The CFA results supported a four-factor model with acceptable fit indices (CMIN/DF = 2.247, GFI = 0.889, CFI = 0.956, RMSEA = 0.073, RMR = 0.105). Convergent validity was supported by significant correlations with the ST-5 at a moderate to relatively high level ( $r = .675$ ;  $p\text{-value} < .001$ ; ranging from .465 to .685). Additionally, the ABI-T-SF demonstrated very high internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .957; ranging from .867 to .919). Thus, the ABI-T-SF is a reliable and valid tool for assessing burnout in academic settings. It offers utility for university administrators, educators, counselors, and researchers; making it suitable for large-scale assessments and routine monitoring of student well-being.

**Keywords:** Academic burnout, Short-form inventory, Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), Thai undergraduate students

## INTRODUCTION

Academic burnout is a growing concern worldwide, particularly in high-pressure educational systems where students are often subjected to intense academic demands. The concept of "**academic burnout**" derives from the original notion of "**burnout**" which was first introduced by Freudenberg (1974) and Maslach (1976). Burnout is defined from a social-psychological perspective as a state of emotional exhaustion, a tendency towards depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach et al., 2001; Yang, 2004). Initial studies on burnout primarily focused on professionals and employees in workplace, particularly those in helping professionals. However, recent research has expanded this concept to include professionals and students in educational settings.

For students, particularly those in higher education institutions, their roles and responsibilities involve structured activities such as attending classes and submitting assignments, which can be considered as "work." There is growing evidences that student expresses symptom of burnout similar to those experienced by employees in the workplace. In this regard, Pines (1980) and Meier (1985) introduced the term "academic burnout" and described as "the exhaustion of students' energy due to prolonged academic pressure and burden, a gradual loss of enthusiasm for schoolwork and activities, indifference and alienation from classmates, and a lack of enthusiasm for schoolwork". In other words, academic burnout can be regarded as an extension of career burnout in students during the learning process. It results from course stress, course load, or other psychological factors, leading to emotional exhaustion, a tendency towards depersonalization, and a sense of low personal accomplishment (Lin & Huang, 2014; Rocha et al., 2020;

Liu et al., 2023). In the literature exploring the prevalence of academic burnout among university students, who are often confronted with rigorous academic demands, competitive environments, and pressures to excel, there is significant concern regarding students frequently scoring at moderate to high levels of academic burnout. This situation can lead to diminished academic achievement and negatively impact mental health, particularly among those in the medical field (Pascoe et al., 2020; Shadid et al., 2020; Kilic et al., 2021; Madigan & Curran, 2021; Rosales-Ricardo et al., 2021).

To effectively address and mitigate the impact of academic burnout, it is crucial to utilize reliable and valid measurement tools. Currently, there are several standardized instruments commonly employed to assess academic burnout among university students (Marôco & Campos, 2012). These include the *Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS)*, which is adapted from the original inventory designed for professionals. The MBI-SS evaluates three core dimensions of academic burnout: emotional exhaustion, cynicism (depersonalization), and academic efficacy. It is widely recognized and has been translated into multiple languages (Portoghese et al., 2018; Obregon et al., 2020; Turhan et al., 2021), including Thai (Naothavorn et al., 2023; Wongtrakul et al., 2023). Another prominent tool is the *Oldenburg Burnout Inventory for Students (OLBI-S)*. The OLBI-S measures exhaustion and disengagement as core dimensions of burnout among students, focusing on energy depletion and detachment from academic tasks (Smith et al., 2022; Loscalzo et al., 2024). Additionally, the *Copenhagen Burnout Inventory-Student Version (CBI-S)* assesses burnout across three domains: personal burnout, work-related burnout, and student-related burnout, thus it is able to reflect a comprehensive evaluation of burnout experiences among students (Campos et al., 2013; Oluwadiya et al., 2024).

Although these measurement tools have demonstrated standardization and robust psychometric properties in the literature, limitations arise in their practical application, especially within the Thai context. Firstly, these tools require translation into the Thai language to facilitate their effective use in the country. Secondly, the issue of length and time consumption is significant: full inventories often include numerous items aimed at comprehensively capturing dimensions of burnout. This results in longer administration times, which may lead to respondent fatigue and reduced completion rates, particularly in settings with time constraints or short attention spans. Additionally, full inventories may not be suitable for frequent administration to monitor changes over shorter periods, potentially hindering timely interventions and real-time monitoring of burnout dynamics among students. Lastly, there is a potential for response biases: respondents may experience fatigue or respond in a socially desirable manner when faced with lengthy assessments which could compromise the accuracy and validity of their responses.

Given these limitations, there is a growing recognition of the need to develop short-form versions of academic burnout inventories. In Thailand, most inventories for assessing academic burnout are either translations of original English versions into Thai or newly developed instruments designed specifically for research purposes. One such inventory is the Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T). The original ABI-T consists of 31 items with a 7-point Likert scale in Thai and captures academic burnout across four core dimensions: emotional instability, decreased cognitive function, lack of motivation, and exhaustion (Wisessathorn et al., 2023). While comprehensive, this full-length inventory presents practical challenges. Therefore, this study aims to develop the *Short Form Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T-SF)* and evaluate its psychometric properties in terms of construct validity, convergent validity and internal consistency reliability. The ABI-T-SF could facilitate educators, school psychologists, counselors, and researchers in the early identification of at-risk students, the early implementation of targeted interventions, and the frequent monitoring of dynamic changes. For policymakers, the short-form inventory offers a cost-effective tool for large-scale assessments, with reduced administration time and simpler data processing requirements, making it easier to implement across entire institutions.

### **Research objectives**

1. To develop the Short Form Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T-SF) derived from the original ABI-T.
2. To assess the psychometric properties of the ABI-T-SF, including its construct validity, convergent validity, and internal consistency reliability.

## METHODS

### *Participants and data collection procedure*

The study employed a cross-sectional research design involving 236 undergraduate students (61 males, 170 females, and 5 unidentified) from various majors in Thailand. The considerations regarding sample size, sampling method, and data collection procedure were as follows:

#### *Sample size consideration:*

The development of the ABI-T-SF is primarily based on confirmatory factor analysis (CFA); thus, sample size considerations align with CFA principles. A commonly accepted guideline recommends a ratio of at least 5:1 (5 participants per estimated parameter), or alternatively, a minimum sample size of 200 participants regardless of the number of indicators (Kyriazos, 2018; Hair, 2019). Therefore, the inclusion of 236 participants in this study was considered appropriate.

In other words, to ensure workability of CFA analysis, the model identification have been characterized as an over-identified model. This refers to a model in which the number of observed variables (indicators) exceeds the number of parameters estimated (latent factors). This condition allows for testing the model's goodness of fit, ensuring that it is adequately constrained by the data to assess its consistency and appropriateness (Kyriazos, 2018; Hair, 2019). In this study, the model included four latent factors (i.e., emotional instability, decreased cognitive function, lack of motivation, and exhaustion) and 31 observed indicators. Each latent factor was associated with specific observed variables, and factor loadings were estimated to determine the strength of these associations. Measurement errors for each observed variable were included to account for potential inaccuracies in the data. Consequently, the model met statistical over-identification criteria, confirming that the inclusion of 4 latent factors, 31 indicators from 236 participants was adequate and suitable for subsequent stages of analysis.

#### *Sampling method consideration:*

The purposive sampling method was utilized to recruit participants for the study. Inclusion criteria were established to ensure the selection of homogenous data in an objectivity, consistency, and uniformity. As a result, the inclusion criteria for this study were: (1) participants were enrolled in a bachelor's degree program (in any subject, major, or university); (2) they were above the age of 18; and (3) they were willing to complete an online questionnaire. Due to the sufficiency of the inclusion criteria in achieving data homogeneity, no exclusion criteria were necessary.

#### *Data collection procedure and research ethics:*

Participants were informed about this research project through the official Facebook page. Interested individuals were invited to participate and completed a questionnaire package, which took approximately 10-15 minutes. The data collection procedure adhered to ethical considerations, ensuring that all participants were treated with respect, anonymity and confidentiality. Participants were fully informed with all relevant information, including the research objective, procedures, risks and benefits, and voluntarily agreed to participate without any form of coercion. All participant information was protected and discarded after the project concluded. Data collection was conducted online exclusively from March to May 2024.

**Table 1** presented a summary of the demographic characteristics of the participants, indicating a majority of female participants. Most were first-year students at the Faculty of Education, with an average age of 23 (SD=4.10) years and an average GPA of 2.71 (SD=0.47).

**Table 1:** The demographic characteristics of participants (n=236)

Demographic characteristics		n (%)
Gender	Males	61 (25.9)
	Females	170 (72.0)
	Unidentified	5 (2.1)
Age (year); Mean, SD (Missing =5)		M=23 (SD=4.10); Min=18; Max=40
GPA (0.00-4.00); Mean, SD (Missing =36)		M=2.71 (SD=0.47); Min=1.50; Max=3.95

Demographic characteristics		n (%)
Education years	First-year	86 (36.4)
	Second-year	17 (7.2)
	Third-year	12 (5.1)
	Fourth-year	51 (21.6)
	Higher than fourth-year	70 (29.7)
Majors ( <i>Missing</i> =3)	Education	127 (53.8)
	Engineering	58 (24.6)
	Psychology	26 (11.0)
	Other majors in social sciences (e.g., Economics, Business administration, Human resource development, Humanities, Liberal arts)	19 (8.0)
	Other majors in sciences	3 (1.3)

## Measurements

Three measurements were employed in the study: a demographic questionnaire, the Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T), and the Stress Test Questionnaire (ST-5).

1. *The demographic questionnaire* inquired general information of participants regarding their gender, age, education years, major subject, and grade point average (GPA) ranging from 0.00 (no points) to 4.00 (maximum points).

### 2. *The Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T)*

The ABI-T is designed to assess the extent of academic burnout among university students. It consists of 31 items across four core dimensions: emotional instability (10 items), decreased cognitive function (11 items), lack of motivation (6 items), and exhaustion (4 items). All items are written in Thai with a response format of a 7-point Likert scale (ranging from 0 to 6). The original ABI-T demonstrated robust psychometric properties, including content validity and high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha ranged from .880 to .955). Each item significantly predicted the overall academic burnout score ( $p < .001$ ), and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) revealed a cumulative variance explained of 72.858% (Wisessathorn et al., 2023). For this study, the original ABI-T was used as a benchmark against its abbreviated version, known as the ABI-T-SF, to assess its construct validity.

### 3. *The Stress Test Questionnaire (ST-5)*

The ST-5 is a self-report screening tool developed by the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. It is designed to assess stress experienced over the past 2-4 weeks. The ST-5 comprises 5 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale (ranging from 0 to 3). All items are written in Thai, with a simple administration and less time requirement, making it widely suitable for use in the country (Attanoruk et al., 2018; Tantalakul & Wongsawat, 2022; Department of Mental Health, 2024). The ST-5 has demonstrated robust psychometric properties; a pilot study involving 31 participants revealed a Cronbach's alpha of .836 (ranging from .781 to .866), indicating high internal consistency reliability. In this study, the ST-5 served as a benchmark for assessing the convergent validity of the ABI-T-SF.

## Data analysis

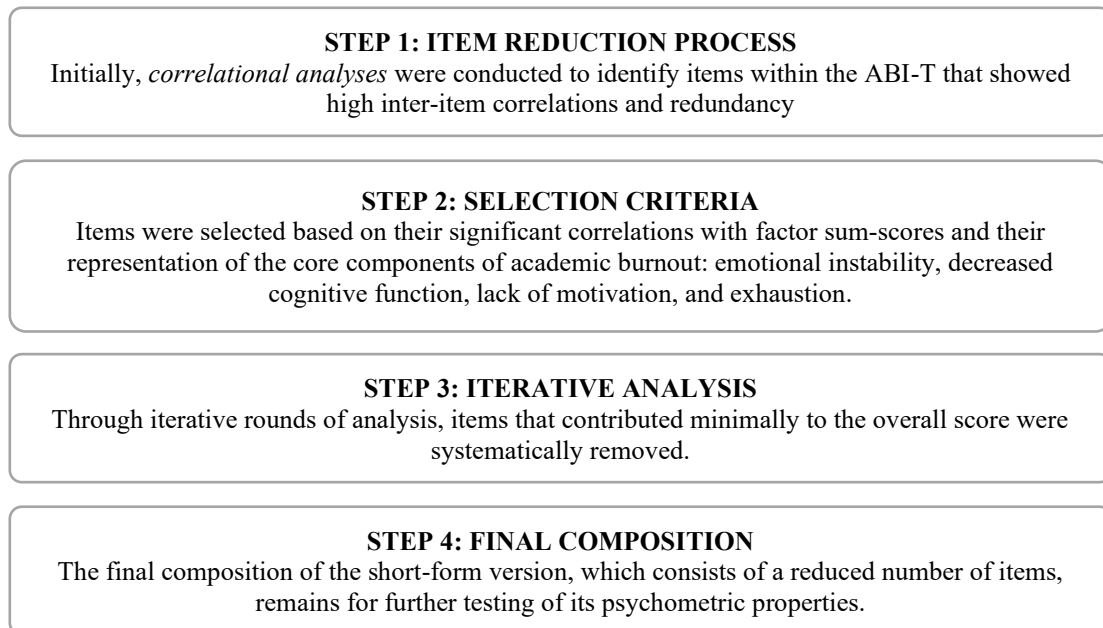
Aligned with the research objectives, the following statistical methods were employed: (1) *Descriptive statistics* to analyze participants' demographic characteristics and their basic scores, (2) *Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)* with AMOS program to evaluate construct validity of the ABI-T-SF against the original ABI-T, (3) *Pearson correlation analysis* to evaluate convergent validity against the ST-5, and (4) *Cronbach's alpha coefficient* to evaluate the internal consistency reliability of the ABI-T-SF.

## FINDINGS

The findings were presented in two sections: (1) Development of the ABI-T-SF, and (2) Testing the ABI-T-SF psychometric properties.

## FINDING 1: DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABI-T-SF

The development of the ABI-T-SF entailed a systematic process aimed at deriving a shortened version from the original 31-item ABI-T. The key steps involved in this development process are illustrated in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1:** Developmental process of the ABI-T-SF

The findings of the ABI-T-SF developmental process were presented. In **Step 1**, Pearson correlation analysis was employed to demonstrate the inter-item correlations with factor sum-scores (SumF1-SumF4) as shown in **Tables 2-5**. **Step 2:** To decide which items should be retained for the short-form version, selection criteria were established based on the correlation coefficients of these items with the factor sum-scores. Items showing significant correlations ( $p$ -value  $< .001$ ) with coefficients greater than 0.80 were retained for further analysis. **Step 3:** In an iterative analysis, items that did not meet the criteria were systematically removed. Finally, **Step 4:** The final composition of the ABI-T-SF comprised 4 factors with 18 items, reduction from the original 31-item ABI-T.

**Table 2:** Correlation analysis of the original ABI-T: Factor 1= Emotional instability ( $n=236$ , number of items = 10)

ITEM	Mean (SD)	Sum F1	No.22	No.23	No.24	No.25	No.26	No.27	No.28	No.29	No.30	No.31
SumF1	12.03 (12.17)	1	.735**	.774**	.757**	.816**	.919**	.849**	.801**	.801**	.742**	.715**
No.22	1.62 (1.76)		1	.506**	.569**	.488**	.639**	.557**	.602**	.494**	.453**	.407**
No.23	1.02 (1.35)			1	.625**	.601**	.672**	.549**	.610**	.526**	.545**	.545**
No.24	1.84 (1.73)				1	.593**	.668**	.517**	.527**	.488**	.435**	.492**
No.25	1.30 (1.67)					1	.769**	.755**	.590**	.601**	.534**	.477**
No.26	1.28 (1.58)						1	.823**	.735**	.698**	.653**	.594**
No.27	1.15 (1.67)							1	.696**	.696**	.577**	.504**
No.28	1.14 (1.55)								1	.573**	.565**	.426**
No.29	1.07 (1.49)									1	.625**	.681**
No.30	0.72 (1.15)										1	.639**
No.31	0.89 (1.42)											1

The value in the table represented the Pearson correlation coefficient. \*\*  $p$ -value  $< .01$ ; \*  $p$ -value  $< .05$

The possible score for each item ranged from 0 to 6, while the possible score for Factor 1 (10 items) ranged from 0 to 60.

**Table 3:** Correlation analysis of the original ABI-T: Factor 2= Decreased cognitive function (n=236, number of items = 11)

ITEM	Mean (SD)	Sum F2	No.5	No.12	No.13	No.14	No.15	No.16	No.17	No.18	No.19	No.20	No.21
SumF2	16.71 (13.52)	1	.800**	.729**	.731**	.865**	.777**	.824**	.690**	.846**	.791**	.859**	.776**
No.5	1.44 (1.60)		1	.490**	.521**	.738**	.543**	.636**	.534**	.600**	.652**	.627**	.594**
No.12	1.22 (1.35)			1	.554**	.603**	.562**	.545**	.556**	.511**	.530**	.554**	.518**
No.13	2.12 (1.65)				1	.677**	.668**	.560**	.516**	.517**	.445**	.520**	.388**
No.14	1.59 (1.48)					1	.735**	.715**	.581**	.658**	.579**	.653**	.603**
No.15	1.43 (1.36)						1	.559**	.460**	.604**	.512**	.648**	.523**
No.16	1.91 (1.77)							1	.552**	.715**	.561**	.653**	.607**
No.17	0.87 (1.41)								1	.543**	.449**	.459**	.410**
No.18	1.62 (1.66)									1	.682**	.810**	.660**
No.19	1.46 (1.56)										1	.767**	.669**
No.20	1.60 (1.65)											1	.741**
No.21	1.46 (1.59)												1

The value in the table represented the Pearson correlation coefficient. \*\* p-value < .01; \* p-value < .05

The possible score for each item ranged from 0 to 6, while the possible score for Factor 2 (11 items) ranged from 0 to 66.

**Table 4:** Correlation analysis of the original ABI-T: Factor 3= Lack of motivation (n=236, number of items = 6)

ITEM	Mean (SD)	SumF3	No.6	No.7	No.8	No.9	No.10	No.11
SumF3	7.08 (7.72)	1	.809**	.736**	.862**	.822**	.764**	.843**
No.6	1.50 (1.83)		1	.568**	.673**	.566**	.458**	.568**
No.7	1.55 (1.83)			1	.571**	.472**	.391**	.456**
No.8	1.25 (1.58)				1	.644**	.567**	.717**
No.9	0.99 (1.51)					1	.650**	.696**
No.10	0.91 (1.47)						1	.720**
No.11	0.89 (1.40)							1

The value in the table represented the Pearson correlation coefficient. \*\* p-value < .01; \* p-value < .05

The possible score for each item ranged from 0 to 6, while the possible score for Factor 3 (6 items) ranged from 0 to 36.

**Table 5:** Correlation analysis of the original ABI-T: Factor 4= Exhaustion (n=236, number of items = 4)

ITEM	Mean (SD)	SumF4	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4
SumF4	7.45 (5.89)	1	.867**	.863**	.853**	.802**
No.1	1.82 (1.69)		1	.727**	.669**	.552**
No.2	1.72 (1.71)			1	.639**	.564**
No.3	1.64 (1.76)				1	.577**
No.4	2.28 (1.81)					1

The value in the table represented the Pearson correlation coefficient. \*\* p-value < .01; \* p-value < .05

The possible score for each item ranged from 0 to 6, while the possible score for Factor 4 (4 items) ranged from 0 to 24.

In summary, as shown in **Tables 2-5**, items that demonstrated significant correlations with factor sum-scores (p-value < .001) and correlation coefficients greater than .80 were retained for further analysis. Overall, the findings revealed that the ABI-T-SF consisted of four factors with a total of 18 items, structured as follows:

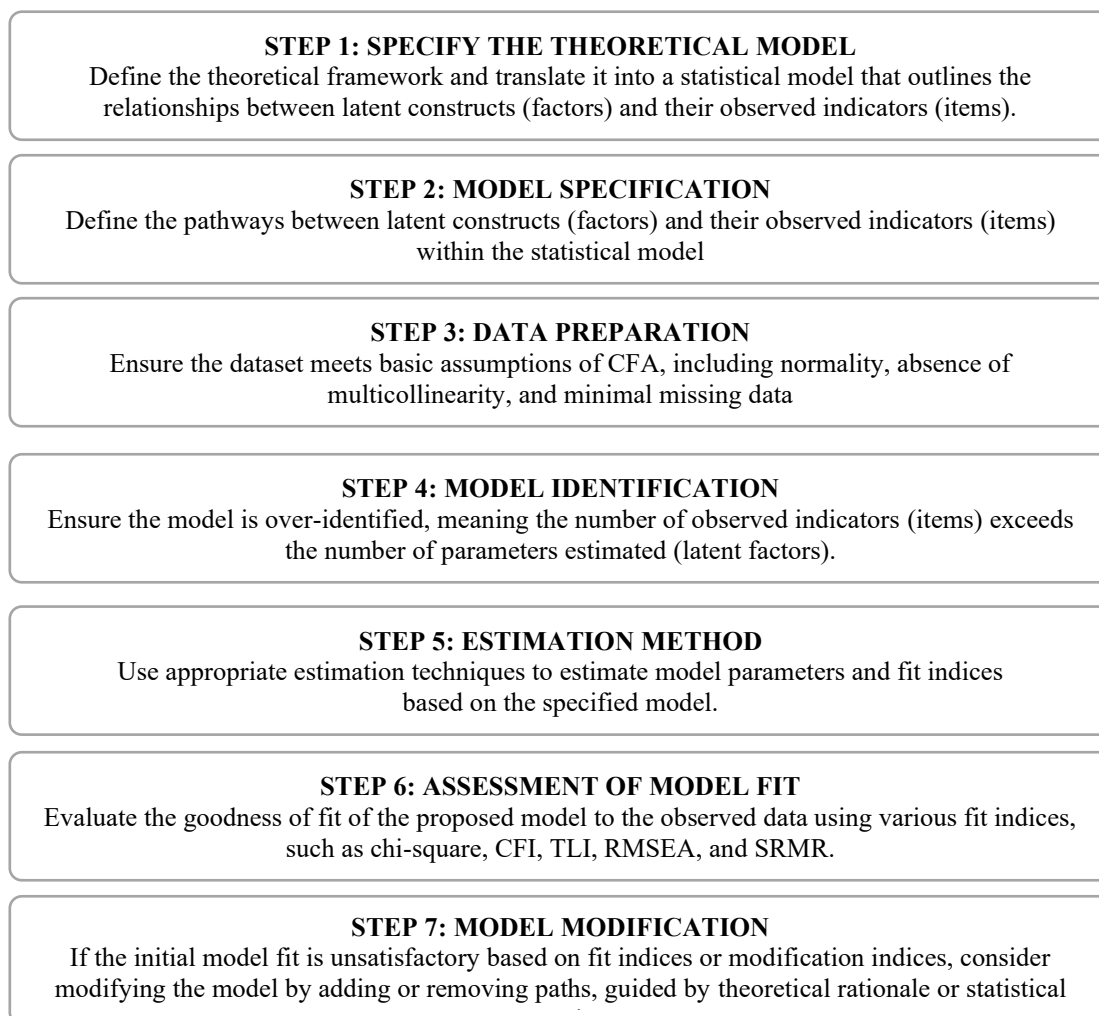
- **Factor 1:** Emotional instability included 5 items (from original 10 items): Item 25,26,27,28,29
- **Factor 2:** Decreased cognitive function included 5 items (from original 11 items): Item 5,14,16,18,20
- **Factor 3:** Lack of motivation included 4 items (from original 6 items): Item 6,8,9,11
- **Factor 4:** Exhaustion included 4 items (same as the original): Item 1,2,3,4

## FINDING 2: TESTING THE ABI-T-SF PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES.

To ensure the standardization of the ABI-T-SF, it is crucial to evaluate its psychometric properties. This study conducted an evaluation of the ABI-T-SF psychometric properties, specifically focusing on construct validity, convergent validity, and internal consistency reliability.

## 2.1 Testing the Construct Validity of the ABI-T-SF

The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the AMOS program was conducted to evaluate the construct validity of the ABI-T-SF. The guideline for the CFA analysis involved seven key steps (Tavakol & Wetzel, 2020), as presented in **Figure 2**.



**Figure 2:** The steps in CFA analysis

The findings of CFA analysis to evaluate the construct validity of the ABI-T-SF against the original ABI-T was presented in **Figure 3** and **Table 6**. The study proceeded **through steps 1-4** by examining the initial theoretical model, which included four latent factors and 18 items, as previously described. This theoretical framework was operationalized into a hypothesized statistical model, wherein each latent factor was defined in relation to 18 observed indicators (items). Data were collected from 236 participants without any missing values. The data demonstrated normality, with skewness ranging from 0.702 to 1.853 and kurtosis ranging from -0.425 to 2.963. Additionally, the data met the criterion for the absence of multicollinearity ( $VIF < 5$ ), with VIF values ranging from 1.843 to 4.364. Although item No. 26 exhibited a VIF of 6.204, it did not pose a significant concern regarding multicollinearity among the indicator variables. This hypothesized model was over-identified model, complying with statistical standards for CFA analysis, as the number of indicators ( $n = 171$ ) exceeded the number of estimated parameters ( $n = 47$ ), resulting in 124 degrees of freedom.

**During steps 5-7** of the estimation process, *maximum likelihood* was employed to estimate model parameters and fit indices. Initially, all pathways appeared significant in the first round of estimation (standardized coefficients  $> .60$ ;  $p$ -value  $< .001$ ). However, upon overall model estimation, it became evident that the model exhibited only partial adequacy in fitting the dataset, necessitating modifications. Following these modifications, particularly in the relationships among epsilon (the error or residual

variance associated with each observed indicator), the modified model demonstrated satisfactory fit, as evidenced by various fit indices meeting statistical criteria. Specifically, the fit indices for the modified model in this study were CMIN/DF = 2.247, GFI = 0.889, CFI = 0.956, RMSEA = 0.073, RMR = 0.105. Meanwhile, the typical statistical criteria for an acceptable model include CMIN/DF  $\leq 3$ , GFI  $> 0.90$ , CFI  $> 0.90$ , RMSEA  $\leq 0.08$ , and RMR ranging from 0.05 to 0.10 (Yaşlıoğlu & Yaşlıoğlu, 2020; Statistical Consulting and Data Analysis, 2024). Therefore, this modified model fits well with the given dataset.

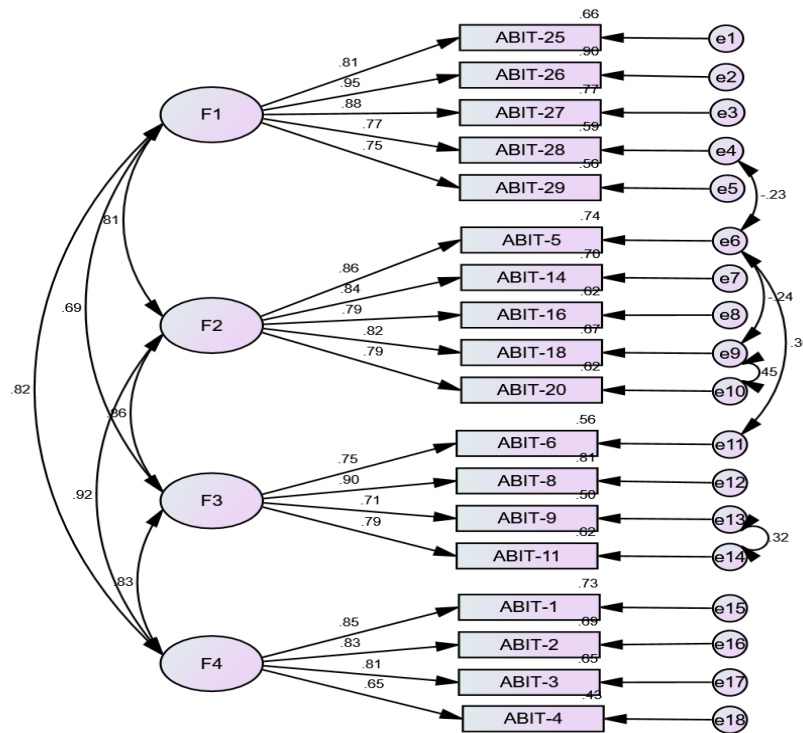
**Table 6** The parameter estimations from the CFA analysis

			Unstandardized Estimation		Standardized Coefficients	Critical Ratio (CR)	p-value	Squared Multiple Correlations
			Unstandardized Coefficients	S.E.				
ABIT-25	<---	F1	1.000		.812			.659
ABIT-26	<---	F1	1.106	.060	.949	18.430	<.001	.900
ABIT-27	<---	F1	1.087	.066	.879	16.439	<.001	.773
ABIT-28	<---	F1	.874	.065	.767	13.506	<.001	.589
ABIT-29	<---	F1	.824	.063	.749	13.039	<.001	.561
ABIT-05	<---	F2	1.000		.859			.737
ABIT-14	<---	F2	.910	.055	.838	16.562	<.001	.702
ABIT-16	<---	F2	1.026	.068	.790	14.992	<.001	.623
ABIT-18	<---	F2	.996	.069	.821	14.341	<.001	.675
ABIT-20	<---	F2	.953	.064	.787	14.852	<.001	.619
ABIT-06	<---	F3	1.000		.748			.560
ABIT-08	<---	F3	1.046	.076	.898	13.810	<.001	.807
ABIT-09	<---	F3	.789	.073	.709	10.762	<.001	.502
ABIT-11	<---	F3	.814	.067	.788	12.118	<.001	.621
ABIT-01	<---	F4	1.000		.853			.727
ABIT-02	<---	F4	.986	.062	.829	15.835	<.001	.688
ABIT-03	<---	F4	.986	.065	.809	15.211	<.001	.654
ABIT-04	<---	F4	.819	.074	.652	11.116	<.001	.425

**Estimation method:** Maximum Likelihood Estimates

**Model modification:** Adjustments made by adding epsilon pathways e9-e10, e6-e9, e13-e14, e6-e11, e4-e6





**Figure 3: The modification model of the ABI-T-SF, using AMOS program**

The values in the model represented standardized coefficients

Model modification made by adding epsilon pathways: e9-e10, e6-e9, e13-e14, e6-e11, e4-e6

The model fit indices were CMIN/DF = 2.247, GFI = 0.889, CFI = 0.956, RMSEA = 0.073, RMR = 0.105

F1= Emotional instability, F2=Decreased cognitive function, F3=Lack of motivation, and F4=Exhaustion

In summary, as presented in **Table 6** and **Figure 3**, the construct validity of the ABI-T-SF was evaluated against the original ABI-T. The findings demonstrated that the ABI-T-SF accurately measures the same underlying constructs as the original ABI-T. This analysis confirmed that the dimensions of academic burnout identified and validated in the original ABI-T were consistently represented and measured by the ABI-T-SF, thereby establishing its standardization in terms of construct validity.

## 2.2 Testing the Convergent Validity of the ABI-T-SF

The convergent validity of the ABI-T-SF was evaluated against the ST-5. Both measurements assess related constructs: the ABI-T-SF measures academic burnout, while the ST-5 assesses stress levels. Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant correlations, with coefficients ranging from .465 (F3) to .685 (F2), indicating a moderate to relatively high level of association. The composite score of the ABI-T-SF showed a significant correlation with the ST-5, with a coefficient of .675. Therefore, it could be concluded that the ABI-T-SF demonstrates moderate convergent validity with the ST-5, as shown in **Table 7**.

**Table 7** Cronbach's alpha coefficients and correlation analysis between ST-5 and ABI-T-SF (n=236)

Measures	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean (SD)	Possible score	No. of items	Correlation analysis of ST-5 and ABI-T-SF					
					ST-5	F1	F2	F3	F4	Composite
ST-5	.876	6.08 (3.98)	0-15	5	1	.640**	.685**	.465**	.577**	.675**
F1	.919	5.95 (6.91)	0-30	5		1	.737**	.601**	.718**	.872**
F2	.913	8.16 (7.05)	0-30	5			1	.750**	.797**	.931**
F3	.873	4.62 (5.40)	0-24	4				1	.691**	.843**
F4	.867	7.45 (5.89)	0-24	4					1	.900**
Composite	.957	26.17 (22.44)	0-108	18						1

\*\* p-value < .01; \* p-value < .05

The value in the table represented the Pearson correlation coefficient.

ST-5=The Stress Test Questionnaire

F1= Emotional instability, F2=Decreased cognitive function, F3=Lack of motivation, and F4=Exhaustion

### 2.3 Testing the Internal Consistency Reliability of the ABI-T-SF

The internal consistency reliability of the ABI-T-SF was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. As shown in **Table 7**, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were notably high for each factor of the ABI-T-SF, ranging from .867 (F4) to .919 (F1), while the coefficients for the composite score was .957. These findings confirmed that the ABI-T-SF has a very high level of internal consistency reliability.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to develop the short form of the academic burnout inventory, namely the ABI-T-SF, and to assess its psychometric properties among Thai undergraduate students (n=236). The ABI-T-SF is intended to be a screening tool for detecting signs of academic burnout at an early stage, thereby facilitating timely intervention to prevent the progression of burnout and its associated negative consequences. Additionally, the ABI-T-SF was designed in the Thai language, making it culturally relevant and widely usable in the country.

### *Discussion on developmental process of the ABI-T-SF*

The development process of the ABI-T-SF involved several steps aimed at ensuring the inventory's robustness, accuracy, and cultural relevance. During the initial stage of short-form development, items from the original ABI-T were carefully selected based on their theoretical significance and empirical performance in correlation analysis. Although Item Response Theory (IRT) or Rasch analysis are typically recommended for such processes (Toland, 2014; Drake et al., 2015; Stemler & Naples, 2021), correlation analysis was deemed suitable and practical for this study. Correlation analysis serves as a robust method in the item reduction process, as described in Classical Test Theory (CTT) (Kořar, 2020). Therefore, in this study, the selection of original ABI-T items was guided by their significant correlations with factor sum-scores and their representation of core components of academic burnout. This approach demonstrated robustness in item reduction, aligning with theoretical recommendations and ensuring the accuracy of capturing essential items for measuring academic burnout in the short-form inventory.

To the end of this developmental process, the ABI-T-SF was structured of four factors comprising a total of 18 items. The core four factors included: *Factor 1 - Emotional Instability* (5 items), *Factor 2 - Decreased Cognitive Function* (5 items), *Factor 3 - Lack of Motivation* (4 items), and *Factor 4 - Exhaustion* (4 items). Compared to the original ABI-T (Wisessathorn et al., 2023), the short form ABI-T-SF retained the same core four factors but with fewer items, reduced from 31 to 18, making it more practical for use.

The theoretical framework underpinning academic burnout in the ABI-T-SF draws on parallels with burnout research in workplace settings, as evidenced by previous studies (Lin & Huang, 2014; Rocha et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2023). However, within the educational context, the ABI-T-SF placed particular emphasis on "*Decreased Cognitive Function (Factor 2)*" as a core factor in the structure of academic burnout. These findings extended the construct of academic burnout beyond traditional measures like the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS), which primarily focuses on emotional exhaustion, cynicism (depersonalization), and academic efficacy (Yavuz & Dogan, 2014; Obregon et al., 2020). Other instruments, such as the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory for Students (OLBI-S), conceptualize academic burnout in terms of energy depletion and detachment from academic tasks (Smith et al., 2022; Loscalzo et al., 2024). The Copenhagen Burnout Inventory-Student Version (CBI-S) encompasses dimensions related to personal, work-related, and student-related burnout (Campos et al., 2013; Oluwadiya et al., 2024). As a result, based on these insights, the operational definition of academic burnout should be broadened to emphasize a multidimensional construct characterized by emotional instability, decreased cognitive function, lack of motivation, and exhaustion.

### *Discussion on psychometric properties of the ABI-T-SF*

This study evaluated the psychometric properties of the ABI-T-SF in terms of its construct validity, convergent validity, and internal consistency reliability. These properties are crucial for ensuring that the ABI-T-SF is a valid and reliable tool for assessing academic burnout among university students.

The construct validity of the ABI-T-SF was assessed through CFA analysis, revealing a four-factor structure with acceptable fit indices (CMIN/DF = 2.247, GFI = 0.889, CFI = 0.956, RMSEA = 0.073, RMR = 0.105), aligning with statistical guidelines. The significant pathways from each item to its respective construct confirmed the robustness of the ABI-T-SF's construct validity, in comparison to the original ABI-T. Additionally, as noted earlier, the ABI-T-SF stand out from previous measures due to its focus on *decreased cognitive function*. This perspective provided an understanding of the cognitive decline frequently observed in students experiencing chronic stress and burnout (Kulikowski, 2021; Reyes-de-Cózar et al., 2023), encompassing a decrease in cognitive skills such as executive functions, working memory, attention, processing speed, and visuospatial abilities (Koutsimani et al., 2021). Thus, the inclusion of these cognitive dimensions in the ABI-T-SF items enhances its construct validity, offering a comprehensive assessment of academic burnout that encompasses psychological, emotional, and cognitive domains.

The convergent validity is a critical aspect of psychometric evaluation as it assesses whether the ABI-T-SF correlates with other instruments designed to measure similar constructs (Morgado et al., 2017; Fenn et al., 2020). In this study, the convergent validity of the ABI-T-SF was evaluated against the Stress Test Questionnaire (ST-5). The results indicated a significant positive correlation between the ABI-T-SF and the ST-5 ( $r = .675, p < .001$ ), with correlations ranging from .465 for *Factor 3: Lack of Motivation* to .685 for *Factor 2: Decreased Cognitive Function*. These findings suggested that the ABI-T-SF effectively measures academic burnout in a manner consistent with the ST-5, thereby confirming the convergent validity of this short-form version.

The internal consistency reliability of the ABI-T-SF was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which yielded a value of .957 for the total scale. Subscale values ranged from .867 for *Factor 4: Exhaustion* to .919 for *Factor 1: Emotional Instability*. These high internal consistency coefficients indicated that the items within each subscale were homogeneous and consistently measured the same underlying construct (Morgado et al., 2017; Fenn et al., 2020). Thus, the psychometric properties of the ABI-T-SF, specifically its reliability, have been confirmed.

### *Limitations and future studies*

These findings ensured the developmental process and psychometric properties of the ABI-T-SF as a short-form inventory for assessing academic burnout among university students. However, some limitations should be taken into account for further investigation. (1) The developmental process of the ABI-T-SF is not yet complete due to pending stages of score interpretation and classification. Future study should aim to extend these processes to ensure practical applicability. (2) The items of the ABI-T-SF were designed in the Thai language and culture, which may limit its generalizability. Future study may consider translating these items into English to increase their applicability across diverse cultural and educational contexts.

Additionally, the ABI-T-SF is designed to detect early signs of academic burnout, however, it is not yet providing interventions to address this condition. As suggested by previous studies, interventions for academic burnout should adopt a multidimensional approach, targeting the development of individual skills such as time management, stress management, emotional regulation, and mindfulness. They should also incorporate skill-building in study techniques, problem-solving, and self-regulation to empower students to manage academic demands more effectively. Furthermore, promoting physical and social activities, such as exercise programs and extracurricular involvement, can foster a sense of balance and community, thereby reducing feelings of isolation (Tang et al., 2021; Madigan et al., 2024). These issues should further exploration in future study to optimize intervention strategies for academic burnout condition.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

The ABI-T-SF can serve as a screening tool to detect signs of academic burnout among university students, thereby promoting their well-being, guiding institutional practices, and fostering a supportive academic environment. Specifically, the ABI-T-SF can benefit educators, psychologists, counselors, and researchers in the following ways:

- *Early Detection and Intervention:* The short-form inventory facilitates early detection of academic burnout among students, allowing institutions to intervene promptly and prevent complication of mental health issues.
- *Efficient Resource Allocation:* Institutions can allocate resources more efficiently by identifying and targeting support services to students experiencing higher levels of burnout as indicated by the inventory.
- *Research and Institutional Assessment:* Data collected through the inventory can contribute to institutional research on student well-being, providing insights into prevalence rates, risk factors, and effective interventions.
- *Policy Development:* Findings from the inventory can inform the development of policies and initiatives aimed at promoting student mental health and creating a supportive academic environment.
- *Enhanced Student Support Services:* Use of the inventory offers a commitment to student welfare, enabling institutions to tailor support services that address specific dimensions of academic burnout identified by the inventory.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study successfully fulfilled two primary objectives related to *the Short Form Academic Burnout Inventory-Thai Edition (ABI-T-SF)* among 236 undergraduate students. First, the development of the ABI-T-SF, derived from its original ABI-T, encompassed four core factors across a total of 18 items, specifically tailored for Thai educational contexts. Second, comprehensive assessments of the ABI-T-SF's psychometric properties, including its construct validity, convergent validity, and internal consistency reliability were conducted. These findings emphasize the instrument's utility as a robust tool for measuring academic burnout in Thai undergraduate students, offering significant implications for institutional practices aimed at promoting student well-being and fostering a supportive academic environment.

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# Narrative Empowerment through Issue-based Learning: Practices in Economics Courses

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## ABSTRACT

To cultivate students' narrative ability in economics and foster an autonomous learning attitude, this study implements a cross-disciplinary course design centered on issue-oriented curriculum. Picture book creation is utilized to inspire students to actively identify problems during the learning process. Through creating picture books, students construct narratives related to economics, thereby enhancing their inclination towards autonomous learning. The labor economics course involves exploring issues, seeking solutions, and transforming acquired knowledge into picture books. This process enriches students' understanding and learning by reorganizing and presenting economic knowledge through narratives. The results show that combining issue discovery, problem understanding, solution finding, and picture book creation helps students clearly express and construct narrative ability. Simultaneously, there is a noticeable improvement in academic performance and a significant strengthening in autonomous learning attitudes, making economics learning more practical and meaningful.

**Keywords:** Issue-based learning, Narrative ability, Economics, Picture book creation, Self-directed learning

## Introduction

Traditional economics teaching methods heavily focus on mathematical models and data analysis, which, while valuable for grasping theoretical frameworks, often fall short in fostering critical thinking and narrative skills among students. Many undergraduates struggle to bridge the gap between abstract concepts and real-world economic applications, making it difficult to apply theoretical knowledge to practical issues (Lin & Chang, 2017). This challenge is particularly evident in advanced courses like 'Labor Economics,' where students, despite their early training in mathematical models, often find it hard to articulate and analyze real economic issues. To address this gap, our study introduces a cross-disciplinary course design that incorporates issue-based learning and picture book creation. This approach aims to enhance students' narrative abilities and promote autonomous learning, thereby making economics education more practical, engaging, and meaningful.

## Literature Review

### *Narrative Ability*

Research on integrating professional knowledge into narrative ability emphasizes its importance in student learning outcomes and motivation. Narrative teaching methods, which guide students in short lectures, copywriting, or proposal writing, help develop students' deep thinking, information gathering, and systematic explanation and discussion skills. Recent years have seen an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary teaching methods, combining narrative ability with various professional disciplines to enhance learning outcomes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

### *Learning in Economics Courses*

Economics is a core required course in business, management, and social sciences. Many economics topics require deep understanding of concepts, data analysis, and graph interpretation, which can be challenging for students (Adams & Kroch, 1989; Kagan et al., 1995; Leuthold, 1998; Smith & Smith, 1988; Weiser & Schug, 1992; Lin & Chang, 2017). Teaching methods significantly impact student performance in economics (Boatman et al., 2008; Brown & Liedholm, 2002; Joyce et al., 2014; Anstine & Skidmore, 2005).

Cooperative and problem-based learning models have shown to improve student engagement and understanding in economics courses (Slavin, 1995; Novak, 1993).

### ***Issue-based Learning***

Problem-based learning (PBL) focuses on student agency, incorporating real-life problems into learning to deepen understanding and application of knowledge. However Issue-based learning emphasizes actively connecting real-world problems with learning. This method encourages students to observe, define, and solve problems through group collaboration and critical thinking. The Ministry of Education has promoted issue-based interdisciplinary narrative ability cultivation since 2019, integrating courses with local development (Chen et al., 2023).

### ***Self-directed Learning***

Self-directed learning emphasizes continuous motivation, self-planned learning, and self-management (Tough, 1966). It can be stimulated through various methods, including tests (Dearen, 1972; Candy, 1987) and project-based learning (Stewart, 2007). Educational games and technology can also enhance self-directed learning attitudes (Cheng et al., 2014; Loretti et al., 2015). Maslow (1954) 's motivation theory and Bandura (1977) 's social learning theory highlight the importance of environment and behavior in shaping learning experiences.

Although issue-based learning methods have been widely applied across various disciplines, their application in economics education remains underexplored. Additionally, existing research often overlooks the incorporation of narrative abilities as a key component of student learning outcomes. This study addresses these gaps by combining issue-based learning with narrative ability development, offering an innovative teaching approach aimed at improving students' overall learning experience. This study integrates past research elements, exploring economic issues, understanding problems, finding solutions, and presenting narratives through picture book creation to help students clearly express and construct narrative ability while enhancing self-directed learning attitudes. In other words, this study explores how a cross-disciplinary course design, utilizing narrative teaching methods, can enhance students' understanding of economics.

### **Empirical Strategies**

The teaching design and planning are based on the Labor Economics course taught by the author. The course includes labor market supply and demand, labor indicators, labor regulations, and various inequality issues. The course design is as follows:

1. Initial Stage: Theoretical teaching and field investigations in three areas: Tamsui old street, rural areas, and emerging cities. Students engage with local leaders and residents to understand labor structures and identify social issues.
2. Mid-term Stage: Issue discussions and economic analysis. Students focus on local issues, using economic logic to develop and explore potential solutions.
3. Final Stage: Presentation of issues and solutions through picture book creation. Students logically and systematically present their observations and solutions using storyboards.

Quantitative analysis includes pre- and post-tests on self-directed learning attitudes based on Micheal (2012) 's scale, covering self-management, desire for learning, and self-control in general and economics-specific contexts. Regression discontinuity design (RDD) is used for empirical analysis to estimate changes in learning tendencies.

The number of students enrolled in the course who agreed to participate in all questionnaires was 54. After excluding three samples that were incomplete or had missing answers, there were 209 valid samples in total, with 126 males and 83 females. Figure 1 shows the pre-test and post-test averages of all sample items on each scale. The average value of each item in the post-test was higher than that in the pre-test. The increase in the dimensions of the economics subject was greater than the basic dimensions, indicating that on average, self-management, desire for learning, and self-control in the professional subject improved under the issue-based narrative teaching design.



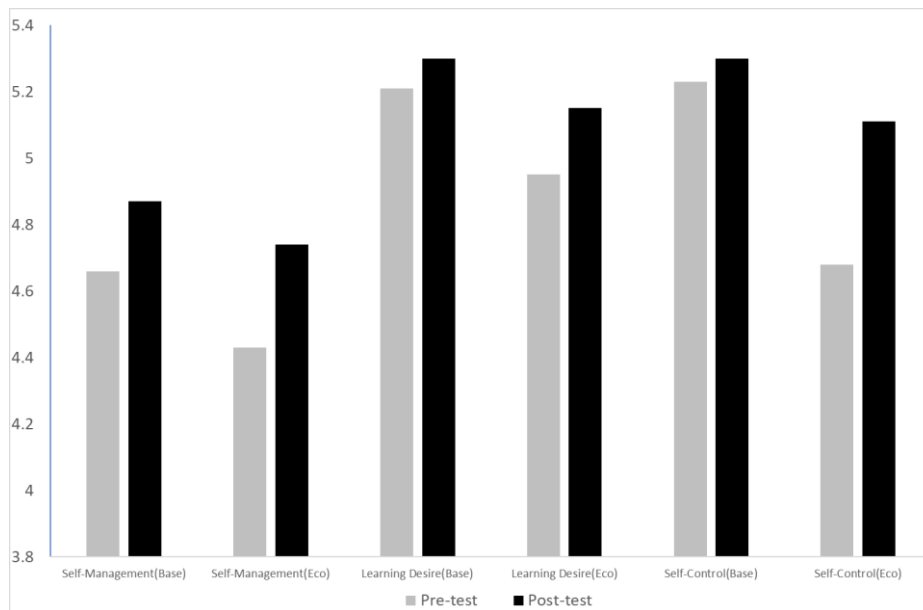


Figure 1: Pre-test and post-test averages for the full sample.

Figures 2 and 3 show the pre-test and post-test results by gender. Although males showed a slight decrease in two basic indicators, both genders showed improvements in the three subject-specific indicators in the post-test compared to the pre-test. Figures 4 and 5 observe the gender differences in pre-test and post-test. In the pre-test, females lagged behind males in all indicators, but in the post-test, females slightly exceeded males in the basic indicators, while males outperformed females in the subject-specific indicators.

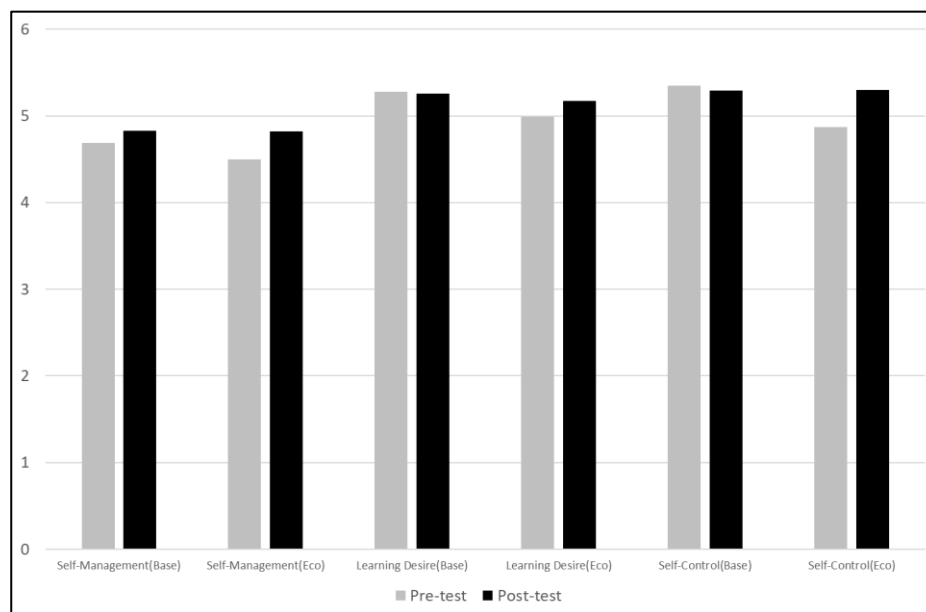


Figure 2: Pre-test and post-test values for males

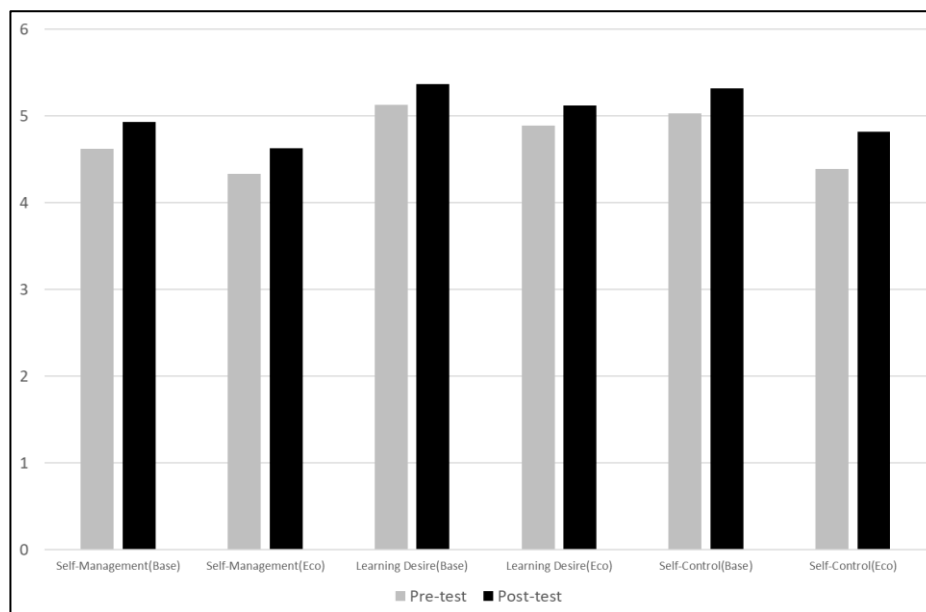


Figure 3: Pre-test and post-test values for females

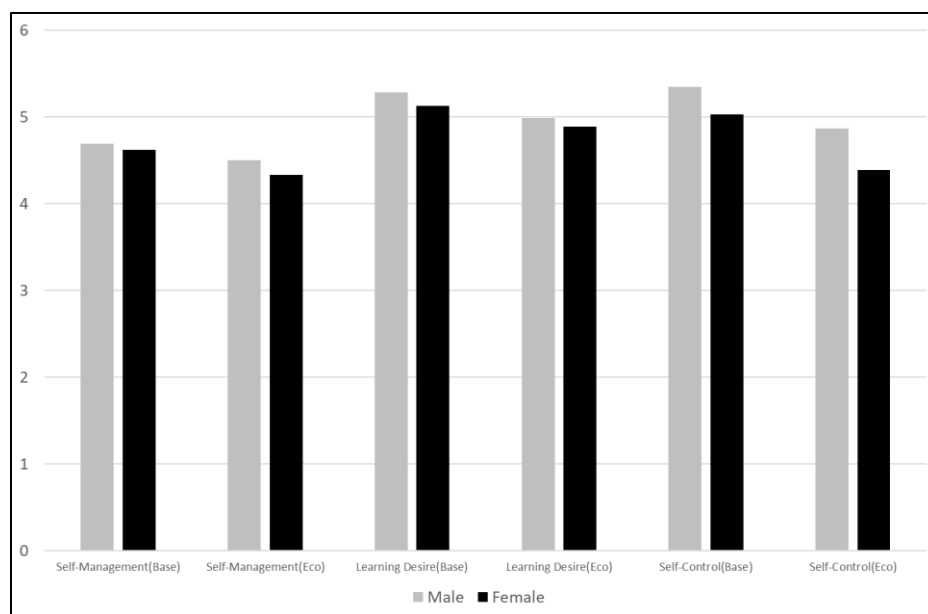


Figure 4: Comparison of pre-test values between males and females

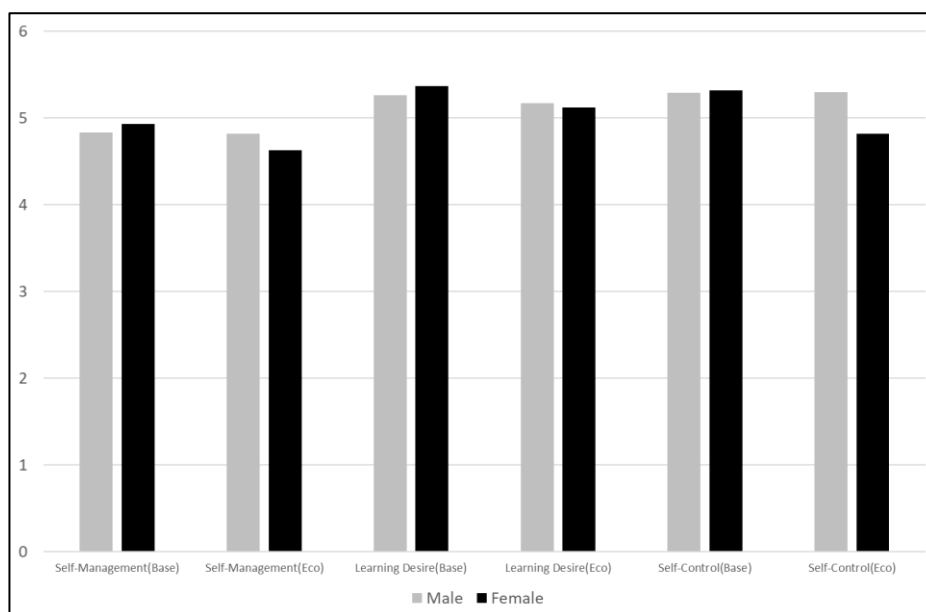


Figure 5: Comparison of post-test values between males and females

The regression analysis results of the RDD model are shown in Tables 1 to 3. Table 1 presents the regression results after controlling for age and gender. “Post-implementation” represents the two post-test phases after the commencement of picture book creation and is a dummy variable (1 for post-test phases after implementation, 0 for pre-test phases before implementation). In the results for the overall sample, only the self-control indicator in the subject-specific dimension reached a 5% significance level, indicating that the degree of self-control in the economics subject increased by an average of 0.4571 on a seven-point scale post-implementation. When observing different genders, males also showed a 10% significance level in the self-control indicator in the subject-specific dimension, with an average increase of 0.4555 on a seven-point scale, while females did not show significant results.

Table 1: The impacts after implementation from six aspects

		Self-Management (Base)	Self-Management (Eco)	Learning Desire (Base)	Learning Desire (Eco)	Self-Control (Base)	Self-Control (Eco)
Full Sample (obs.=209)	Post	0.2330 (0.1950)	0.3407 (0.2055)	0.1205 (0.1986)	0.2261 (0.2021)	0.1044 (0.2014)	0.4571** (0.1987)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.92	0.91	0.93	0.92	0.93	0.92
Male (obs.=126)	Post	0.1586 (0.2654)	0.3440 (0.2925)	-0.0056 (0.2759)	0.1872 (0.2742)	-0.0493 (0.2704)	0.4555* (0.2601)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.91	0.89	0.92	0.92	0.93	0.93
Female (obs.=83)	Post	0.3464 (0.2818)	0.3390 (0.2681)	0.3124 (0.2727)	0.2865 (0.2942)	0.3397 (0.2966)	0.4656 (0.3091)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.93	0.93	0.95	0.94	0.94	0.92

\*\*\* represents significance at the 1% level; \*\* represents significance at the 5% level; \* represents significance at the 10% level.

Table 2 integrates the basic and subject-specific dimensions into three major indicators, with each indicator representing the average value of the basic and subject-specific dimensions. Although the regression coefficients were positive, they did not reach the 10% significance level.

Table 2: The impacts after implementation from three Dimension

		Self-Management	Learning Desire	Self-Control
Full Sample (obs.=209)	Post	0.5738 (0.3853)	0.3466 (0.3801)	0.5616 (0.3734)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.92	0.93	0.93
Male (obs.=126)	Post	0.5026 (0.5403)	0.1816 (0.5223)	0.4061 (0.4983)

	R <sup>2</sup>	0.91	0.93	0.93
Female (obs.=83)	Post	0.6854 (0.5217)	0.5989 (0.5367)	0.8053 (0.5596)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.94	0.95	0.94

Table 3 averages the three indicators separately for the basic and subject-specific dimensions. In the economic dimension for the overall sample, there was a 10% significance level, indicating a significant improvement of 1.0239 in the level of subject-specific attitudes after the implementation of the teaching method.

To further examine the impact of the narrative teaching method of economic issue picture book creation on learning performance, this study conducted a subject test at the beginning and end of the term (the same test with 20 questions, each worth 0.5 points). The performance of narrative ability was evaluated through issue reports conducted at mid-term and the end of the term, with peer evaluation scores averaged (total score of 100). The regression results are shown in Table 4. The results indicate that in terms of subject tests, male students were more significantly affected by the teaching method, reaching a 5% significance level, with an increase of 1.2139 in learning performance by the end of the term. This suggests that the teaching method of economic issue picture book creation has a noticeable positive effect on the academic performance of male students. Regarding narrative ability performance, both male and female students showed significant improvements, achieving a 1% significance level. This demonstrates that the teaching method has a universal impact on enhancing students' narrative abilities, regardless of gender. This may be because the creation of economic issue picture books encourages students to think and express complex economic concepts, thereby improving their narrative skills.

Table 3: The impacts after implementation from two tracks

		Base Track	Economics Track
Full Sample (obs.=209)	Post	0.4580 (0.5540)	1.0239* (0.5577)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.94	0.93
Male (obs.=126)	Post	0.1037 (0.7503)	0.9866 (0.7664)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.93	0.93
Female (obs.=83)	Post	0.9986 (0.8040)	1.0911 (0.7915)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.95	0.94

\*\*\* represents significance at the 1% level; \*\* represents significance at the 5% level; \* represents significance at the 10% level.

Table 4: The impacts after implementation for learning performance

		Academic Grades	Narrative Ability
Full Sample (obs.=209)	Post	0.8663* (0.4660)	23.6840*** (2.3756)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.94	0.95
Male (obs.=126)	Post	1.2139** (0.6122)	23.3585*** (2.7056)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.94	0.96
Female (obs.=83)	Post	0.3324 (0.7123)	24.2429*** (4.3674)
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.94	0.92

\*\*\* represents significance at the 1% level; \*\* represents significance at the 5% level; \* represents significance at the 10% level.

## Results & Discussion

### *Execution and Analysis*

The initial phase of the study emphasized in-depth learning of labor economics theories and concepts, which was significantly enriched by integrating real-world observations through field investigations. These practical investigations into local labor issues played a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding

and critical thinking. As students engaged with real-world economic problems, they were better able to contextualize abstract theoretical concepts, thereby bridging the gap between theory and practice.

In the later phase, the creative process of picture book creation allowed students to narrate their economic observations and analyses in a visually engaging and accessible format. This creative endeavor not only improved their narrative skills but also deepened their comprehension of complex economic issues. The process of transforming empirical data into narrative form required students to simplify and reframe economic concepts, which facilitated a deeper understanding and retention of the material.

Quantitative analysis further confirmed these findings, showing significant improvements in students' self-directed learning attitudes, particularly in areas of self-management, desire for learning, and self-control in economics. The results from the Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD) model indicated that these improvements were reflected in enhanced academic performance and narrative ability, underscoring the efficacy of the integrated teaching approach.

Comparative analysis revealed that male students exhibited a more substantial increase in self-control within the economics-specific dimension, while female students showed greater improvement in the basic dimensions. This suggests that the teaching method, while universally beneficial, may influence different student groups in varied ways, highlighting the importance of tailoring educational strategies to account for individual differences such as gender.

### ***Teacher Reflections***

The integration of real-world observations, issue-based learning, and creative expression through picture book creation required teachers to adopt a multifaceted approach to instruction. Teachers acted not only as knowledge transmitters but also as facilitators and inspirers of student curiosity and engagement. The success of this method hinged on the teachers' ability to ask effective questions, guide the learning process, and foster an environment conducive to deep learning and critical thinking.

Teachers reported that the combination of real-world observations with issue-based learning significantly increased student engagement and motivation. The creative aspect of picture book creation further amplified this engagement by encouraging students to visualize and narrate economic concepts in a way that was both meaningful and relatable. This method not only enhanced students' narrative abilities but also helped them internalize and better understand complex economic theories.

Moreover, the collaborative nature of picture book creation fostered peer learning and cooperation, enriching the educational experience. Teachers observed that students typically struggled with traditional lecture-based methods showed remarkable improvement in both their understanding of the material and their ability to articulate their thoughts. This approach also provided teachers with deeper insights into students' perspectives and learning processes, allowing for more personalized and effective instruction.

### ***Student Feedback***

Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many students expressing that the opportunity to observe real-world economic issues and translate them into narrative forms through picture books made the learning process more engaging and meaningful. The hands-on experience of investigating local labor market issues enabled students to see the practical applications of theoretical concepts, making their learning more relevant to real-world challenges.

Students highlighted that creating picture books to present economic narratives was particularly enjoyable and enlightening. This creative process helped them better understand and articulate economic issues, as they were required to simplify complex concepts and present them in an engaging and accessible format. This not only improved their narrative skills but also deepened their understanding of the subject matter.

Furthermore, students reported that this method of learning contributed significantly to their personal and academic growth. They noted an increase in their motivation to learn and a greater sense of accomplishment from seeing their work come to fruition in the form of a completed picture book. The collaborative nature of the project fostered a strong sense of community and peer support, as students worked together to develop their narratives and provide feedback on each other's work.

Students also observed that the issue-based approach heightened their awareness of the societal impact of economic issues and their potential role in addressing these challenges. This increased awareness, coupled

with the combination of theoretical learning, practical investigation, and creative expression, helped them develop a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of economics.

### ***Comparative Analysis with Previous Studies***

When comparing findings with previous studies, it becomes evident that the integration of real-world observations, issue-based learning, and creative expression through narrative forms has a significant positive impact on student learning outcomes. Prior research has established the value of experiential learning and creative methodologies in enhancing student engagement and comprehension (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Adams & Kroch, 1989). This study builds on these findings by demonstrating how the combination of these approaches not only improves academic performance but also cultivates essential skills such as critical thinking, narrative ability, and autonomous learning.

### **Conclusions**

Issue-based narrative learning provides an engaging and proactive learning experience connected to real-world challenges. By integrating field observations and practical investigations with creative narrative techniques such as picture book creation, this approach not only enhances students' understanding of economic concepts but also fosters critical thinking, creativity, and self-directed learning. The findings of this study indicate significant improvements in students' academic performance and narrative abilities, underscoring the effectiveness of this innovative teaching strategy. This study has four suggestions:

**Learning Outcome Assessment:** Develop diverse assessment tools to evaluate student learning comprehensively. Traditional tests may not fully capture the depth of understanding and creativity fostered by this approach. Therefore, incorporating portfolios, oral presentations, and participation in discussions can provide a more holistic evaluation of student learning outcomes.

**Diverse Learning Tools:** Integrate emerging educational technologies to provide varied learning experiences. Technologies such as digital storytelling tools, interactive simulations, and online collaboration platforms can further enhance the learning process, making it more dynamic and accessible for students.

**Interdisciplinary Integration:** Promote interdisciplinary integration for a better understanding of complex real-world issues. By combining insights from economics with other fields such as sociology, environmental science, and public policy, students can develop a more comprehensive and nuanced perspective on the issues they study. This approach encourages cross-disciplinary thinking and problem-solving skills.

**Educational Policy Support:** Support and encourage issue-based and problem-based teaching methods through educational policies. Policymakers should provide resources and training for educators to implement these innovative teaching methods effectively. This includes funding for professional development, curriculum development, and the integration of new technologies.

In addition, the study highlights the critical role of teachers in facilitating learning. Teachers must not only impart knowledge but also inspire and guide students through their learning journeys. This requires a diverse set of teaching skills and the ability to create a supportive and interactive learning environment. Student feedback has been positive, indicating that issue-based narrative learning makes the educational experience more engaging and relevant. Students appreciate the opportunity to connect their academic studies with real-world issues and to express their understanding through creative means. This method has also been shown to increase students' motivation and willingness to engage in autonomous learning.

Future research should continue exploring and refining this teaching method to meet student and societal needs. Investigating the long-term impacts of issue-based narrative learning on students' academic and professional trajectories can provide further insights into its effectiveness. Additionally, expanding this approach to other disciplines and educational levels can help to understand its broader applicability and potential benefits.

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# **Implementation of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning in a Catholic School: Benchmarking from the Standards of Quality in Basic Education Schools**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Amidst the crises faced by the Philippine educational system, several reform movements promote standards-based teaching and learning in the country. Aligned with the regional and international frameworks of quality education, the primary drive behind the standards movement is to provide all students with the opportunity for rigorous, high-level learning to achieve their full potential in a time of great academic diversity. This study determined the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning in terms of curriculum, instruction, and assessment in a Senior High School program of a private university as assessed by teachers and students. Using a descriptive-comparative research design, the study utilized a total enumeration of 46 teachers and a stratified random sample of 227 students. The data were gathered using a modified research questionnaire. Mean, standard deviation, and one-way analysis of variance and Kruskal-Wallis H test were employed in data analyses. The findings revealed that the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning as assessed by teachers is excellent. Similarly, as assessed by students, the overall extent of implementation is very good. Results revealed significant differences in the extent of implementation as assessed by students when grouped according to strand. However, no significant difference was revealed as assessed by teachers when grouped according to teaching experiences and educational qualification. The findings of the study will serve as the basis for the formulation of the Content, Delivery, and Assessment (CDA) Plan to be utilized by all subjects in senior high school.

**Keywords:** Standards-based teaching and learning, Standards of quality, Basic education schools, Quantitative research, Philippine education

## **Background of the Study**

Standards-based education (SBE) has emerged as a global paradigm shift in educational systems, aiming to establish clear and measurable learning objectives for all students (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Slizewski, 2020). Standards shape teaching goals and guide teachers on what and how to teach students to help them meet the learning expectations defined in the standards (Nasser & Alhija, 2019). This approach underscores the importance of aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure students acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in the 21st century (Wenzel, 2016; Seitz, 2017; Ismael et al., 2020). International studies have demonstrated the positive impact of standards-based education on student achievement, particularly in countries with high-performing education systems (Schleicher, 2018).

While the benefits of standards-based teaching and learning are evident in developed countries, its implementation in developing nations presents unique challenges. Factors such as limited resources, infrastructure constraints (Cek, 2023), and teacher capacity development often hinder the effective adoption of this approach (Fullan, 2007). Despite these challenges, there is a growing recognition of the potential of standards-based education to improve learning outcomes in low-income contexts (UNESCO, 2015). In recent times, the broad concept of standards-based or outcome-based has been driven by a neoliberal approach to education reform, and governments worldwide have launched standards- or outcomes-based initiatives in response to poor rankings on international tests (e.g., PISA, TIMSS, and PRLIS, etc.) (Nasser & Alhija, 2019).

The Philippines has undergone significant education reforms in recent years, with a strong emphasis on improving the quality of basic education. The Department of Education (DepEd) has introduced the K-12

curriculum aligned with global standards and competencies. This curriculum framework emphasizes standards-based teaching and learning as a core principle to ensure all students achieve the desired learning outcomes (DepEd, 2012). To operationalize SBE, the DepEd introduced the Standards of Quality in Basic Education (SQBE), which provides a framework for school improvement and accountability (DepEd, 2013) as stipulated in DepEd Quality Policy Statement to provide learners with quality basic education that is accessible, inclusive, and liberating through proactive leadership, shared governance, evidence-based policies, standards and programs, responsive and relevant curricula, highly competent and committed officials, teaching and non-teaching personnel, and an enabling environment.

While the Philippines has made strides in implementing standards-based education, several challenges persist, such as inadequate teacher training, lack of resources, and variations in school contexts. These are the realities that Basic education schools, specifically senior high schools, encounter, and addressing these issues is crucial for successfully implementing standards-based teaching and learning. These factors have hindered the full realization of the potential benefits of standards-based teaching and learning, specifically in the curriculum, instruction, and assessments.

Several studies have explored standards-based education reform (Smistad, 2013; Hamilton et al., 2008; Banerjee & Manjunath, 2022), standards-based teaching and learning (Guskey, 2016), standards-based curriculum (Squires, 2005), standards-based assessment (Herman, 2016; Squires, 2005; Black & Wiliam, 2009). However, studies on implementing standards-based teaching and learning in various contexts and research is limited. This gap in the literature underscores the need for a comprehensive investigation into how these schools operationalize standards-based teaching and learning principles and the extent to which they meet the rigorous standards of quality in Basic Education Schools. Thus, this study is conducted to bridge this gap in the literature.

In this context, the researcher is driven to investigate the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching-learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by senior high school teachers and students. The findings of the study will serve as the basis for the formulation of a Content, Delivery, and Assessment (CDA) Plan to be utilized by all subjects in senior high school.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study posits that the successful implementation of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning (SBTL) in a basic education school hinges on the alignment and synergy among three core components: curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The curriculum must be meticulously designed to embody the standards, ensuring that learning objectives are clear, relevant, and challenging. Instruction should be tailored to facilitate the attainment of these objectives, employing diverse pedagogical approaches that cater to the diverse learning needs of students. Assessment, in turn, should serve as a tool for measuring student progress and providing feedback that informs teaching and learning. The harmonious interplay of these three components creates a dynamic learning environment where students are empowered to achieve their full potential.

The theory of backward design, as advocated by Wiggins and McTighe (2005), provides a robust foundation for this framework. The backward design emphasizes the importance of starting with the end in mind, that is, identifying the desired learning outcomes before planning instruction and assessment. This approach ensures that all aspects of teaching and learning are purposefully aligned to support student achievement of the standards. The three stages of backward design—identifying desired results, determining acceptable evidence, and planning learning experiences and instruction—mirror the three core components of the proposed framework.

The connection between the proposed framework and backward design is evident in their shared emphasis on intentionality and alignment. Both frameworks recognize the importance of establishing clear learning

goals based on standards and designing curriculum, instruction, and assessment to support attaining these goals. The proposed framework builds upon the backward design by explicitly highlighting the interdependence of the three components and the need for their synergistic implementation. By integrating the principles of backward design, the framework provides a practical roadmap for schools to implement SBTL effectively and ensure that all students receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success in the 21st century.

## **Methodology**

### **Research design**

This paper utilized a quantitative design, which provides a numerical description of the population's trends, attitudes, opinions, and associations (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Specifically, this study utilized descriptive and comparative approaches to investigate the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching-learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers and students.

### **Respondents**

The respondents of this study were 227 randomly selected senior high school students and 46 total enumeration of senior high school teachers at a Catholic university. The selected respondents were representatives of the following strands: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics- Engineering and Information Technology (STEM-EIT), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics- Allied Medical Health (STEM-AMH), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM), and Technical- Vocational Livelihood- Home Economics (TVL-HE).

### **Measures**

A modified research questionnaire based on the Standards of Quality for Basic Education Schools (PAASCU, 2021) was utilized to measure the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching-learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The research instrument is composed of 4 parts: Part I covered the demographics; Part 2 covered eight items for standard 1 on curriculum; Part 3 is composed of six items for standard 2 on instruction; and Part 4 is composed of six items for standard 3 on assessment. The instrument was validated by three experts in the field using Good and Scates (1972). The instrument obtained a score of 4.79, which is interpreted as excellent. In assessing the reliability of the instrument, the internal consistency was examined using Cronbach's Alpha through 30 sampled students. As a result, the questionnaire was considered acceptable, with a 0.803 rating deemed appropriate for data gathering.

### **Data analysis**

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in treating and analyzing data. To determine the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching-learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers and students, mean and standard deviation were utilized. On the other hand, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine the significant difference in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students when grouped according to strand. This was after testing for the normality of data distribution using Anderson-Darling. Moreover, the Kruskal-Wallis H test was utilized to determine the significant differences in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and overall standard as assessed by teachers when grouped according to the number of years of teaching and educational qualifications.

## Results

### *Extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students*

Mean and standard deviation were utilized to assess the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students when taken as a whole and grouped according to strands. Table 1 shows that the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students is very good ( $M=3.83$ ,  $SD=0.88$ ), with curriculum as the highest ( $M=3.87$ ,  $SD=0.88$ ), and instruction as the lowest ( $M=3.77$ ,  $SD=0.9$ ) both interpreted very good. Overall, the standards have been effectively implemented, leading to very good results. In terms of the strand, HUMSS obtained the highest mean ( $M=4.54$ ,  $0.6$ ), interpreted as very good, while ABM/TVL obtained the lowest mean ( $M=3.87$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ), interpreted as very good.

**Table 1.** Extent of Implementation of Standards-based Teaching and Learning in the Areas of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as Assessed by Students

Variables	n	Standard 1 (curriculum)			Standard 2 (instruction)			Standard 3 (assessment)			Overall Standard		
		M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
<i>Strand</i>													
HUMSS	25	4.59	0.5	E	4.47	0.68	E	4.55	0.66	E	4.54	0.6	E
STEM-AMH	86	3.81	0.91	VG	3.78	0.91	VG	3.8	0.89	VG	3.8	0.89	VG
STEM-EIT	86	3.71	0.88	VG	3.56	0.91	VG	3.63	0.89	VG	3.64	0.88	VG
ABM/TVL	30	3.9	0.81	VG	3.78	0.74	VG	3.92	0.7	VG	3.87	0.74	VG
<i>As a whole</i>	227	3.87	0.88	VG	3.77	0.9	VG	3.83	0.88	VG	3.83	0.88	VG

Note: 4.15-5.00=Excellent, 3.32-4.41=Very Good, 0.00-0.82=Not Implemented

### *Extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers*

Mean and standard deviation were utilized to measure the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers when taken as a whole and when grouped according to the number of years in teaching and educational qualifications. Table 2 shows the excellent implementation of standards-based teaching and learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers ( $M=4.44$ ,  $SD=0.44$ ). In terms of the standards, assessment obtained the highest mean ( $M=4.56$ ,  $SD=0.49$ ) while instruction obtained the lowest mean ( $M=4.39$ ,  $SD=0.51$ ), both interpreted as excellent.

In terms of the number of years of teaching, teachers with 11 years and more teaching experience obtained the highest mean ( $M=4.63$ ,  $SD=0.24$ ), while teachers with 6 to 10 years of teaching experience obtained the lowest mean ( $M=4.26$ ,  $SD=0.42$ ), both interpreted as excellent. However, in terms of educational qualifications, teachers who are doctorate degree holders obtained the highest mean of implementation ( $M=4.72$ ,  $SD=0.37$ ), while teachers with master's degrees obtained the lowest mean ( $M=4.3$ ,  $SD=0.42$ ), both interpreted as excellent.

**Table 2.** Extent of Implementation of Standards-based Teaching and Learning in the Areas of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as Assessed by Teachers

Variables	n	Standard 1 (curriculum)			Standard 2 (instruction)			Standard 3 (assessment)			Overall Standard		
		M	SD	Int.	M	SD	Int.	M	SD	Int.	M	SD	Int.
<i>Number of years of teaching</i>													
0 to 3	16	4.51	0.59	E	4.49	0.6	E	4.62	0.41	E	4.54	0.51	E
4 to 5	8	4.33	0.34	E	4.33	0.45	E	4.4	0.68	E	4.35	0.41	E
6 to 10	13	4.15	0.42	E	4.23	0.52	E	4.45	0.56	E	4.26	0.42	E
11 and up	9	4.61	0.24	E	4.5	0.39	E	4.78	0.22	E	4.63	0.24	E
<i>Educational qualifications</i>													
Baccalaureate	23	4.5	0.5	E	4.53	0.46	E	4.58	0.51	E	4.53	0.44	E
Masters	20	4.23	0.41	E	4.2	0.52	E	4.5	0.49	E	4.3	0.42	E
Doctorate	3	4.67	0.38	E	4.61	0.54	E	4.89	0.19	E	4.72	0.37	E
<i>As a whole</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>4.4</i>	<i>0.47</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>4.39</i>	<i>0.51</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>4.56</i>	<i>0.49</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>4.44</i>	<i>0.44</i>	<i>E</i>

Note: 4.15-5.00=Excellent, 3.32-4.41=Very Good, 0.00-0.82=Not Implemented

***Difference in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students***

Anderson-Darling was utilized to determine the normality of data in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and overall standards as assessed by students when grouped according to strand. The results show a normally distributed extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum (AD = -47.796, p =1.000), instruction (AD = -46.719, p =1.000), assessment (AD = -47.367, p =1.000), and over-all standard (AD = -47.546, p =1.000), as assessed by students when grouped according to strand.

One-way analysis of variance was utilized to determine the significant difference in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students when grouped according to strand. Table 3 shows that the difference was significant in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students when grouped according to strand for p-values obtained exceeded 0.05.

**Table 3.** Difference in the Extent of Implementation of Standards-based Teaching and Learning in the Areas of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as Assessed by Students when Grouped according to Strand

Variables	Strand	n	Mean	SD	F	df	p-values
Standard 1 (curriculum)	HUMSS	25	4.59b	0.50	7.230	3	.000*
	STEM-AMH	86	3.81a	0.91		223	
	STEM-EIT	86	3.71a	0.88			
	ABM/TVL	30	3.90a	0.81			
Standard 2 (instruction)	HUMSS	25	4.47b	0.68	7.099	3	.000*
	STEM-AMH	86	3.78a	0.91		223	
	STEM-EIT	86	3.56a	0.91			
	ABM/TVL	30	3.78a	0.74			
Standard 3 (assessment)	HUMSS	25	4.55b	0.66	7.737	3	.000*

	STEM-AMH	86	3.80a	0.89		223	
	STEM-EIT	86	3.63a	0.89			
	ABM/TVL	30	3.92a	0.70			
Overall Standard	HUMSS	25	4.54b	0.60	7.479	3	.000*
	STEM-AMH	86	3.80a	0.89		223	
	STEM-EIT	86	3.64a	0.88			
	ABM/TVL	30	3.87a	0.74			

Note: the difference in the means is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$ , mean ranks that share a letter were not significantly different

**Differences in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers when grouped according to the number of years in teaching.**

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was utilized to determine the significant difference in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers when grouped according to the number of years of teaching. Table 4 shows that the difference was not significant in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and overall standard as assessed by teachers when grouped according to the number of years of teaching for p-values obtained exceeded 0.05.

**Table 4.** Difference in the Extent of Implementation of Standards-based Teaching and learning in the Areas of curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as Assessed by Teachers when Grouped according to the Number of Years of Teaching

Variables	Number of years of teaching	n	Mean Rank	$\chi^2$	df	p
Standard 1 (curriculum)	0 to 3	16	28.22a	7.626	3	.054
	4 to 5	8	20.50a			
	6 to 10	13	16.12a			
	11 and up	9	28.44a			
Standard 2 (instruction)	0 to 3	16	27.31a	3.600	3	.308
	4 to 5	8	20.25a			
	6 to 10	13	19.04a			
	11 and up	9	26.06a			
Standard 3 (assessment)	0 to 3	16	24.56a	2.416	3	.491
	4 to 5	8	20.75a			
	6 to 10	13	20.46a			
	11 and up	9	28.44a			
Overall Standard	0 to 3	16	27.09a	5.233	3	.156
	4 to 5	8	20.06a			
	6 to 10	13	17.81a			
	11 and up	9	28.39a			

Note: the difference in the means is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$ , mean ranks that share a letter were not significantly different

**Differences in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by teachers when grouped according to educational qualification.**

The Kruskal-Wallis H test was utilized to determine the significant difference in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and overall standard as assessed by teachers when grouped according to educational qualification. Table 5

shows that the difference was not significant in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and overall standard as assessed by teachers when grouped according to educational qualification for p-values obtained exceeded 0.05.

**Table 5.** Difference in the Extent of Implementation of Standards-based Teaching and Learning in the Areas of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as Assessed by Teachers when Grouped According to Educational Qualification

Variables	Educational Qualification	n	Mean Rank	$\chi^2$	df	p
Standard 1 (curriculum)	Baccalaureate	23	26.87	5.590	2	.061
	Masters	20	18.38			
	Doctorate	3	31.83			
Standard 2 (instruction)	Baccalaureate	23	27.11	5.142	2	.076
	Masters	20	18.48			
	Doctorate	3	29.33			
Standard 3 (assessment)	Baccalaureate	23	24.26	2.604	2	.272
	Masters	20	21.08			
	Doctorate	3	33.83			
Overall Standard	Baccalaureate	23	26.37	4.604	2	.100
	Masters	20	18.93			
	Doctorate	3	32.00			

*Note: the difference in the means is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$ , mean ranks that share a letter were not significantly different*

## Discussion

The fact that the curriculum received the highest rating suggests that students perceive it as well-implemented based on the standards and relevant to their learning needs. In addition, the highest result in the curriculum is attributed to the giving of subject orientation among subject areas and the collaboration among subject areas specific to the performance tasks. Subject orientation plays a crucial role in setting the stage for student success. It familiarizes students with the course content, expectations, and assessment methods, reducing anxiety and promoting a sense of preparedness (Davis, 2013; Mayhew et al., 2010). Additionally, it helps establish a positive learning environment by fostering connections between students and instructors and clarifying any potential misconceptions about the subject matter (Chen et al., 2019).

The positive student perceptions of SBTL in this study suggest that the school is on the right track in implementing this approach. However, the slightly lower rating for instruction indicates potential areas for improvement. On the other hand, the slightly lower rating for instruction might indicate areas for improvement in terms of implementation. Getting feedback from the parents and alumni for the improvement of the classroom activities based on the learning modality is observed to be consistently implemented as assessed by students.

Parental feedback is an invaluable tool for enhancing the effectiveness of classroom activities. By gaining insights into their children's experiences, teachers can identify areas for improvement and tailor instruction to better meet student needs (Đurišić & Bunijevac, 2017; Hill & Taylor, 2004). Furthermore, parental feedback fosters a sense of shared responsibility between home and school, creating a collaborative environment that supports student learning and development (Manalo et al., 2023; Paccaud et al., 2021). When parents feel heard and valued, they are more likely to actively engage in their child's education, increasing student motivation and academic success (Lerner et al., 2022; Topor et al., 2010). Therefore, consistently and actively seeking and incorporating parental feedback is essential for creating a responsive and dynamic classroom environment that promotes optimal student learning outcomes.

In terms of the strand, HUMSS considered that the curriculum of the strand was effectively implemented, which led to excellent results followed by the assessment. The high rating from HUMSS students indicates they find their curriculum effectively implemented and believe it contributes to their excellent results. The specific mention of assessment suggests that they find the assessment methods in their strand fair, relevant, and aligned with the curriculum objectives. Moreover, HUMSS students perceived that the curriculum is dynamic, rigorous, and responsive to the challenges of changing times. It is consistent with the school's philosophy, vision, mission, and goals to ensure the learners' integral formation and lifelong learning.

An effectively implemented curriculum serves as a crucial cornerstone in fostering students' academic success. A well-structured, engaging, and relevant learning experience empowers students to develop the knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities necessary for excellence (Avalos, 2011; Toro, 2019). A thoughtfully designed curriculum that aligns with student needs and interests promotes intrinsic motivation, leading to deeper understanding and improved performance (Little, 2012). Moreover, an effectively implemented curriculum facilitates clear learning objectives, systematic assessment, and targeted feedback, enabling teachers and students to monitor progress and make necessary adjustments (Karakuş, 2021).

On the other hand, instruction is seen to be the weakest area of implementation as assessed by the ABM/TVL students. The appropriate teaching modalities, methods, and learning activities to achieve the desired learning outcomes must be aligned with the school's educational philosophy and consistently implemented and evaluated. The alignment of teaching modalities, methods, and learning activities with a school's educational philosophy is fundamental to achieving desired learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Furthermore, this alignment promotes consistency and clarity, enabling educators to create a supportive learning environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally (Monteiro et al., 2021; Walberg, 2010). Ultimately, the intentional alignment of pedagogy with the school's educational philosophy is essential for creating a meaningful and impactful educational experience that empowers students to reach their full potential.

Based on the implementation of the teaching and learning, the standards have been effectively implemented and have led to very good results as assessed by teachers. This suggests that teachers agree on successfully implementing SBTL across curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This means that the practice of the standard is exemplary and serves as a model for others and that the implementation of the criterion has led to excellent results. The high rating for assessment in this study aligns with research highlighting the importance of aligning assessment practices with SBTL principles to provide meaningful feedback and support student learning (Alonzo et al., 2023; Boud & Falchikov, 2006).

Furthermore, a closer look at the specific standards reveals that assessment practices received the highest mean score, indicating that teachers feel most confident aligning with SBTL. Teachers perceived an in-place system to plan and select the most appropriate types of assessment aligned with the achievement of the expected learning outcomes (Alonzo et al., 2023). While still rated as excellent, instruction received the lowest score, suggesting potential areas for further development and refinement in instructional practices to fully embody SBTL principles. The slightly lower rating for instruction echoes findings that suggest that aligning instructional practices with SBTL can be challenging and requires ongoing professional development and support (Meng, 2023; Ajani, 2023).

The result of the implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, as assessed by teachers, suggests that with increased teaching experience comes a greater understanding and proficiency in implementing SBTL. This could be attributed to several factors, such as accumulated knowledge, refined instructional practices, and greater confidence in adapting to new teaching approaches. These results align with existing research on the relationship between teaching experience and SBTL implementation. Studies have shown that experienced teachers are often more adept at integrating SBTL principles into their practice due to their deeper pedagogical knowledge and ability to adapt to evolving educational standards (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Filgona et al., 2020). Moreover, research suggests that experienced teachers are more likely to engage in reflective practice and continuous



professional development, which can further enhance their implementation of SBTL (Machost & Stains, 2023; Riyanti, 2021).

The disparity in the results based on educational qualifications could be attributed to several factors. Doctorate holders, having undergone rigorous research and pedagogical training, might possess a more profound understanding of SBTL principles and their practical application in diverse classroom settings. Their advanced studies may have equipped them with refined instructional strategies, assessment techniques, and curriculum design skills that align seamlessly with SBTL. These findings resonate with existing literature that underscores the positive correlation between teacher qualifications and instructional quality. Research suggests that teachers with advanced degrees often demonstrate stronger pedagogical content knowledge and a greater inclination towards student-centered, inquiry-based pedagogies, which are hallmarks of SBTL (Filgona et al., 2020). Furthermore, teachers with higher qualifications may exhibit a greater propensity for reflective practice and continuous professional development, enabling them to stay abreast of the latest educational research and refine their teaching approaches accordingly (Cojorn & Sonsupap, 2024; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Padillo et al., 2021). This commitment to lifelong learning could translate to a more nuanced and effective implementation of SBTL.

The significant difference in the implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as assessed by students when grouped according to strand means that the strand where students belong matters in their perception of how the school implements the standards-based teaching and learning. The difference suggests that the implementation varies notably across different strands, implying that some strands may experience more consistent implementation of standards-based teaching and learning than others. The post hoc test revealed that HUMSS participants obtained a higher mean on the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and overall standards than other strands. This suggests that HUMSS students perceive a more effective or thorough application of these educational standards in their strand, which could reflect differences in how the standards are being implemented or possibly the alignment of teaching strategies with the nature of HUMSS subjects.

Different strands may require distinct pedagogical approaches to effectively implement SBTL. HUMSS subjects, for instance, might lend themselves well to inquiry-based learning or project-based approaches that inherently align with SBTL principles. Research by Gray and DiLoreto (2016), Cho et al. (2021), and Holmes (2014) demonstrated that adapting SBTL implementation to suit the unique characteristics of different subjects can enhance student perception, engagement, and learning outcomes. In addition, teachers' expertise and familiarity with SBTL might vary across strands, influencing their ability to implement these practices effectively. Sultan and Shafi (2014), Petalla and Madrigal (2017), and Malagsic et al. (2021) found that teachers' confidence and competence in SBTL are crucial for successful implementation and positively impact student perceptions.

Students' expectations and engagement levels might vary across strands, influencing their perception of SBTL implementation. HUMSS students, for example, maybe more intrinsically motivated or have higher expectations for SBTL, leading to a more positive perception. Lo et al. (2022) and Fuertes et al. (2023) suggested that student motivation and engagement play a crucial role in their perception of teaching practices and learning experiences.

Additionally, the result of the study suggests that the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching and learning is consistent regardless of the teachers' length of experience, indicating a uniform perception of standards-based education learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Similarly, this implies that regardless of their experience level, teachers exhibit a similar engagement and adoption of standards-based teaching and learning practices. Other factors may be considered contributory to the consistency of perceptions of teachers aside from the number of years of service. One is curriculum, instruction, and assessment alignment with SBTL, providing clear guidance and support for teachers, irrespective of their experience. Wijngaards-de Meij and Merx (2018) and Johnson et al. (2020) emphasized the need for curriculum alignment to facilitate the consistent implementation of SBTL, ensuring that teachers have access to resources and materials that support these practices.

Also, the collaborative culture of the school that encourages knowledge sharing and peer learning may facilitate the dissemination of SBTL practices across different experience levels. Schleifer et al. (2017), Cojorn and Sonsupap (2024), and Khasawneh et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of collaborative professional learning communities in promoting the adoption of new teaching approaches based on the standards of quality education and fostering a sense of collective responsibility for student learning.

The absence of a significant difference in the extent of implementation of standards-based teaching learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and overall standard as assessed by teachers when grouped according to educational qualification suggests that educational qualifications do not significantly affect how teachers perceive the implement of standards-based teaching and learning in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, implying a consistent application of these standards regardless of their academic background. Schools and educational institutions may provide comprehensive professional development programs on SBTL, ensuring that teachers with diverse educational backgrounds receive adequate training and support to implement these practices effectively. Research by Smith (2011), Petalla and Madrigal (2017), Malagsic et al. (2021), and Audisio et al. (2023) found that ongoing professional development is crucial for successful SBTL implementation, fostering a shared understanding and commitment among teachers, regardless of their qualifications.

Moreover, teachers' intrinsic motivation and beliefs about the value of SBTL may drive their engagement with these practices, regardless of their educational qualifications. Xu (2012), Petalla (2024), Wolf and Brown (2023), and Latif and Wasim (2022) suggested that teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of SBTL play a crucial role in their willingness to adopt and implement these practices.

## **Conclusion**

The study underscores the successful integration of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning (SBTL) within the private Catholic school's Senior High School program. The positive perceptions of both teachers and students highlight the efficacy of the school's efforts in aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with SBTL principles. However, the identified areas for improvement, particularly in instructional practices, emphasize the need for continuous refinement and professional development to fully realize the potential of SBTL. The variations in student perceptions across different strands further underscore the importance of tailoring SBTL implementation to meet the diverse needs of learners. The study's findings offer valuable guidance for educational institutions seeking to enhance their teaching and learning practices through SBTL, promoting a more student-centered, outcomes-oriented approach to education. The insights gleaned from this research can inform policy decisions and professional development initiatives, ultimately contributing to a more effective and equitable education system.

## **Recommendations**

To aid teachers in the development of their competence and efficiency, the following recommendations were suggested: (a) The school administrators should prioritize the enhancement of instructional practices to fully align with SBTL principles, (b) The academic unit should ensure that the curriculum is consistently aligned with SBTL standards across all strands, (c) Teachers should actively engage in professional development opportunities to deepen their understanding of SBTL principles and their practical application in the classroom, (d) Students should take an active role in their learning by setting personal learning goals, seeking clarification when needed, and actively participating in classroom activities, and (e) Future researchers could extend the scope of this study by including multiple schools with diverse contexts, such as public and private schools, urban and rural settings, and schools with varying levels of resources and infrastructure.

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# Promoting Climate Change Awareness Through English Language Teaching: English Teachers' Perceptions

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## ABSTRACT

Climate change, a global issue that has led to disasters and social problems, necessitates the involvement of individuals in all sectors, including language teachers. Concerning the potential role of English Language Teaching (ELT) in raising learners' awareness of climate change issues, teachers' perception of the issue is critical. Since teachers are on the front lines in classrooms, their beliefs and attitudes on specific issues may influence their choice of instructional process. Thus, there shall be preparations for teachers to aim for successful education on global issues. However, despite several studies examining climate change issues, a limited study investigates ELT teachers' beliefs and attitudes in the Indonesian context. Therefore, this study holds significant value as it aims to fill this gap by examining language teachers' beliefs and attitudes on climate change issues, specifically in Sumba, Indonesia. The participants were 34 English teachers at junior high schools. Data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of six dimensions. Using the Likert Scale, participants expressed their agreement using 5 points; then, the results were analyzed descriptively. The overall result shows that English language teachers in Sumba positively perceive climate change and are willing to take action regarding adaptation and mitigation in the context of climate change. Some items resulted in moderate and negative responses, implying that they might require additional encouragement to do so. The proposed implication is for policymakers to undertake programs to equip language teachers with knowledge of climate change and how to integrate it into their courses.

**Keywords:** Climate change, Teachers' perception, English Language Teaching

## Introduction

Our planet is facing critical degradation. Over the past century, climate change issue has created significant environmental problems. Based on the latest report from the United Nations (Luterbacher et al., 2021), the change in the climate system has caused massive environmental distraught, which has led to natural disasters around the globe, and inevitably, all aspects of human life are affected by the catastrophes. Therefore, immediate actions are required to promote everyone's participation in the issue. In other words, global awareness should involve each individual in addressing the issue. As described in the research report by the British Council (Bruter et al., 2021), there have been attempts to spread climate change awareness through partnerships among countries and organizations. In addition to using the medium of culture, art, and technology, they have striven to promote the urgency of environmental awareness through culture, art, and education. In this case, education can be a powerful tool to raise awareness and support climate change adaptation, mitigation, and resilience.

Despite its significant contributions, today's education paradigm appears to place environmental issues within the realm of sciences related explicitly to nature; thus, news, reports, and study results about climate change are mainly featured using the science scope. Typically, formal discussions on environmental issues are limited to science classrooms. Due to the urgency of spreading awareness of environmental problems, there should be a shift from the current paradigm to a new commitment to promote climate change awareness in all fields of study and treat climate change as an unseparated classroom discussion (Anderson, 2012).

Language is a means of communication. Therefore, it is common for language classrooms to engage students in varying topics. Since the post-method era of language pedagogy, English language teaching (ELT) approaches have striven to enable learners to engage in meaningful communication rather than mere



memorization of grammatical forms of language. Approaches like Content-based Instruction (CBI) and Communicative Approach, supported by specific teaching methods such as projects, role plays, and simulations, will make the topics of climate change possible to be integrated into ELT (Chuku, 2020; Hauschild et al., 2012; Nkwetisama, 2011; Veselinovska & Kirova, 2013). Therefore, incorporating global issues into language classrooms is beneficial for developing meaningful language use. In other words, language classrooms allow students to enhance their language skills and, eventually, use them for meaningful communication in the real world (Hauschild et al., 2012). As cited in Veselinovska and Kirova (2013) and Nkwetisama (2011), Babcock argues that language teaching and learning involve transferring macro and micro skills related to appropriate expressions of communication, and environmental issues offer abundant opportunities for discussion. Inviting students to discuss ecological issues is reasonable because students interact with the environment daily. Therefore, they see, feel, and directly connect with problems in their surroundings. For that reason, schools, including teachers, potentially play a critical role in promoting climate change awareness through their learning support in the forms of curricular, pedagogical, and technological resources (Feinstein & Mach, 2019).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Although there have been studies discussing teachers' vital role in spreading climate change awareness, including the discussion on teachers' perception toward the issue, they used general samples of teachers from all backgrounds of studies. Those teaching subjects other than English and English language teachers remain an underrepresented demographic. This study addresses the gap by exploring English teachers' beliefs and attitudes on climate change issues in response to the urgency of promoting climate change awareness through language classrooms. This study's results are expected to present initial knowledge of English teachers' readiness for climate change issues. Further, the results are expected to convince education policymakers about the efficacy of embedding environmental issues in the curriculum and carrying out adequate preparation for teachers.

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Reshaping the concept of English Language Teaching***

We must acknowledge that today, the world is without boundaries. The robust advance of technology has allowed people across the globe to communicate through various media. Therefore, we cannot understate the role of English as an international medium of communication. Apart from the necessity to be a globally connected society, there is a growing demand for English mastery; thus, English Language Teaching (ELT) has become mandatory in non-English speaking countries, or so-called "outer circle countries" in Kachru's (1990) concentric circle of English, where learners are directed to achieve the competencies of learning the language to communicate.

Consequently, the teachers and school put a mere target on mastering the language, and ELT focuses on improving learners' skills in the language. Another problem is that economic and political issues drive the necessity to master English. Katunich (2020) criticized the conventional ELT, which has been restricted to responding to "the economic logic of the market" (p. 42). Indeed, global partnerships aim to improve the sustainable life of global citizens. However, it should be noted that sustainability goals are not raised exclusively around economic and political issues. Environmental issues are another issue worth considering.

There should be an attempt to redesign language practices to empower the use of language for more general social and cultural, including environmental changes. Therefore, language education must be responsive to a wider range of contexts and able to bring changes to the social environment. Discussion in language classrooms is required to include a critical thinking component rather than merely focusing on language skills training. Similarly, Katunich (2020) proposes that shifting the language teaching paradigm serves a pragmatic and instrumental purpose; and eventually, those working in the field of ELT should revisit their goals in teaching and critically think of how to teach the language to address the sustainability crises.

#### ***Teachers' beliefs and attitudes to climate change***

Studies have found a strong correlation between teacher belief and attitude to learning outcomes. Nation (2017, p. 15) argues, "The relationship between teacher beliefs and their practice is complex and influenced by a variety of factors, which impact teachers' instruction". In other words, teachers' choice of instructional

practices is primarily influenced by their beliefs and attitudes toward specific issues. With that in mind, preparation is required for teachers to allow the successful transfer of global knowledge to students.

Willingness to take action regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation means that individuals are eager to alter their behaviour and ways of life to protect the environment. In other words, they have the motivation to participate in sustainable development. Vukelić et al. (2022) argue that individuals who are willing to act in the context of mitigation and adaptation to climate change are:

“... characterized by dedication and passion in dealing with sustainable development issues, knowledge regarding the problems in question, a critical but positive attitude towards various ways of solving the previously mentioned issues as well as trust in personal skills and capacities needed to create improved conditions” (Vukelić et al., 2022, p. 3).

Despite the potential role that teachers are agents of promoting climate change awareness in their classrooms, a concern related to their attitude and belief toward the issue shall be anticipated. Previous studies found that teachers' awareness of environmental problems is still low. In his study, Papadimitriou (2004) reported that the prospective primary teachers perceived climate change as taking place, but they are lacking knowledge of the impact of climate change on the environment and all living beings. Consequently, they are unaware of the proper actions that are required for mitigations and adaptations. Similar results were shown in the study (Çelikler & Aksan, 2011; Dal et al., 2014; Dove, 1996; Fortner, 2001) as cited in Dal et al., (2015) which found that teachers do not have adequate knowledge of environmental issues. The lack of understanding had impeded the teachers to develop awareness; and thus, they do not have the motivation to spread it to others.

### ***The roles of ELT teachers***

Departed from the notion that ELT should no longer be perceived as a resource to promote communication for political and economic aspects, English language teachers are responsible for expanding their teaching goals. This is in line with Katunich (2020), who proposes that instead of restraining English merely to answer the 'economic logic of the market' (p. 42). Consequently, English teachers should understand that they must also respond to ecological injustices. Pennycook (2007) supports a similar idea, stating that English educators can act as agents to spread public awareness of global environmental problems and eventually help the public find solutions. According to Rivers as cited by Nkwetisama (2011): “As language teachers we are the most fortunate of teachers ... all subjects are ours. Whatever [our learners] want to communicate about, whatever they want to read about, is our subject matter” (p.110). This idea is similar to Kouritzin (2020), who argues that English teachers have the privilege of spreading climate change awareness because of their positions as competent in English. This language has been considered the lingua franca and is globally accessible. This situation, therefore, gives ELT professionals the liberty to be internationally connected and establish collective empowerment to share their beliefs. In short, all the aforementioned causes suggest that, conspicuously, language teachers have unique positions to take their stand amid languages, cultures, and ideologies to drive language teaching to specific objectives. For that reason, ELT professionals have the responsibility to raise awareness of climate change and its impacts on the environment; thus, they must develop, evaluate, and implement pedagogical practices that contribute to ecological well-being, sustainability, and justice (Delavan, 2020; Goulah, 2017; Micalay-Hurtado & Poole, 2022).

### **Methodology**

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. It was chosen to generate views, opinions, feelings, and or perceptions of the target population of the subject matter under investigation. The data were collected through questionnaires adapted from Vukelić et al. (2022), which consisted of six dimensions to measure: 1) willingness to act in climate change mitigation and adaptation context; 2) attitudes towards climate change; 3) perception of action possibilities in climate change mitigation and adaptation context; 4) perception of future in climate change context; 5) interest in climate change; and 6) concern for ecological problems.

Questionnaires were distributed based on data from junior high school English teachers provided by the Education Department of East Sumba. Due to the large geographical area of East Sumba Regency, Google

Forms was used to collect the responses. Out of 102 English teachers, 34 filled out the questionnaires, which were then used as the data of this study.

The study also collected data on participants' age, gender, location, and years of teaching experience. The data were collected to obtain a preview of their socio-demographic characteristics. The questionnaires consisted of some parts. The first part of the questionnaire measures the respondents' general perception regarding climate change issues. The second part of the questionnaires was the more detailed questions used to measure teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward climate change. The second part of the questionnaire adapted from Vukelić et al. (2022) consisted of six dimensions: 1) willingness to act in climate change mitigation and adaptation context (8 items); 2) attitudes towards climate change (5 items); 3) perception of action possibilities in climate change mitigation and adaptation context (4 items); 4) perception of future in climate change context (7 items); 5) interest in climate change (5 items); and 6) concern for ecological problems (10 items). The participants had to respond to 39 items in the form of statements. The questionnaire was designed using the Likert Scale, where the participants expressed their agreement using 5 points (1— "I completely disagree," 5— "I completely agree").

## Results and Discussions

The study collected data on participants' age, gender, location, and years of teaching experience, which can be seen in the following table.

Table 1: The Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	25	74%
Male	9	26%
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
< 25	1	3%
25-35	14	41%
36-45	10	29%
> 45	9	26%
<b>Teaching experience (in years)</b>		
< 5	8	24%
5-10	6	18%
11-15	10	29%
> 15	10	29%
<b>District</b>		
Waingapu	13	38%
Kambera	14	41%
Kanatang	4	12%
Pahungalodu	1	3%
Ngadu Ngala	1	3%
Pinupahar	1	3%

Table 1 shows that the respondents are dominated by female teachers (74%). As for age, the majority of respondents are aged between 25-35 years old (41%). The teaching experience of the respondents was also recorded with two similar percentages, 29% for those who have 11-15 years and more than 15 years. This data implies that the respondents are not novel teachers. Lastly, the district represents the respondents' location. It was found that most of the respondents come from schools in Waingapu and Kambera. The two districts are located in the central city of East Sumba.

### ***Familiarity with Climate Change Issues***

This study also collected data on the respondents' familiarity with climate change issues. There are two questions to find the data, i.e., 1) Are you familiar with climate change issues?; and 2) Have you heard/ watched/ read any topics related to climate change? The result is presented in the following figures.

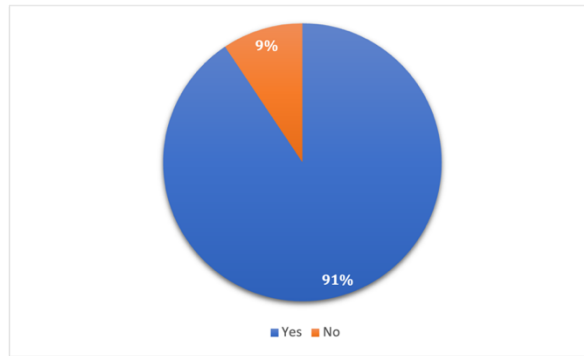


Figure 1: Respondents' Familiarity with Climate Change Issues

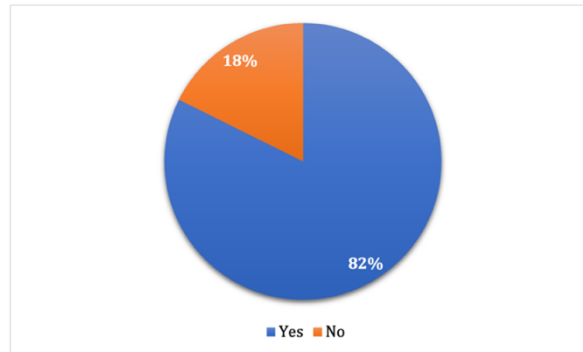


Figure 2: Respondents' Exposure to Climate Change Issues

Figures 3 and 4 show that the study found that the majority of respondents are familiar with climate change issues (82.35%), and a minor number of respondents claimed that they are not familiar with the topic (8.82%).

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of six dimensions. The overall result of the six dimensions showed an average score of 4.04. The results are presented in each dimension as follows:

### ***Willingness to Act in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation***

Table 2: Respondents' Willingness to Act in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Dimensions	Item	Average
Willingness to act in climate change mitigation and adaptation	1. I am ready to self-initiatively do what it takes to mitigate climate change.	4.32
	2. I am ready to do what it takes to mitigate climate change if somebody would require me to do it (e.g., local government).	2.94
	3. Protecting the climate represents a more significant task compared to others.	3.09
	4. I am ready to limit my future travels, especially by plane.	3.15
	5. I will try to learn as much as possible about climate change.	4.12
	6. Along with previous formal education (school and faculty), I am studying climate change informally.	3.38
	7. I would like to teach about climate change at my future job.	3.79

	8. I intend to include the issue of climate change in my future job.	3.82
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Table 2 shows that the result on the first dimension regarding willingness to act in climate change represents a moderate response with an average score of 3.58, which shows that the respondents are willing to take actions regarding climate change mitigation and adaptation. However, there might be some factors that influence their decision to act. The neutral responses were represented at items (2), (3), (4), (6), (7), and (8) with an average score of 2.94 to 3.82. This means that they might not be too excited to join in any activities related to climate change, nor will they refuse to do similar activities. In other words, the respondents are risk-neutral people. However, the response to item (1) received an average score of 4.32; and item (5) with an average score of 4.12, which is categorized as highly positive. The result shows that they are willing to initiate any mitigation actions and learn as much as possible about climate change issues. Similarly, they have high intentions to include the issue of climate change in their future job.

### *Attitudes toward Climate Change*

Table 3: Respondents' Attitudes toward Climate Change

Dimensions	Item	Average
Attitudes toward climate change	1. Climate change represents a very serious problem.	4.38
	2. Climate change represents a threat to my future well-being and safety.	4.18
	3. Climate change represents a threat to future generations, their lives, and their safety.	4.12
	4. Climate change represents a threat to humankind on planet Earth.	4.00
	5. Climate change represents a threat to all living beings on Earth (including animals and plants).	4.09

Table 3 presents the second dimension regarding attitudes towards climate change. The result shows that all four items received an average score of 4.15 (high), ranging from 4.00 to 4.38. The result implies that respondents' attitude toward climate change is positive. In other words, they are sensitive to the issue and open to performing any mitigation actions. The result also implies that respondents are aware that climate change is a problem and may threaten all aspects of living.

### *Perception of Action Possibilities in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Context*

Table 4: Respondents' Perception of Action Possibilities in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Context

Dimensions	Item	Average
Perception of action possibilities in climate change mitigation and adaptation	1. What I do as an individual will not help in mitigating climate change	2.15
	2. We can't do anything to stop climate change	2.15
	3. What we do can stop climate change from becoming an even bigger problem.	3.50
	4. I believe I can persuade others to put effort into mitigating climate change.	3.82

In general, the results of this dimension mean that respondents believe there are possibilities for seeking alternatives for mitigations and adaptations to the climate change crisis.

The result at this dimension regarding the perception of action possibilities in climate change mitigation and adaptation shows a positive response with an average score of 4.31 for overall items. Although the responses to items (1) and (2) were relatively low at an average of 2.15, the two statements were designed in negative expressions. As for item (3), it received a medium score of 3.50. This represents that respondents might not be sure whether the actions they do will be able to stop climate change. This response is interesting because the respondents might have had a better understanding of climate change as they filled

out the questionnaires. They are aware that climate change is a serious issue but as their awareness grows, respondents appear to be more careful to determine the effectiveness of their actions to address the issue. This result is in line with the score for item (4). This item received a highly positive response with an average score of 3.82, which represents that as their understanding of the danger of climate change, they have a positive belief that they can persuade others to put effort into mitigating climate change. In other words, as their understanding grows, they are highly motivated to spread awareness to others.

Overall, the four items in this dimension show positive results; therefore, it can be implied that respondents are optimistic that there are solutions to any climate change issues and alternatives to mitigation. They believe that it is possible to influence climate change mitigation and adaptation.

### ***Perception of the Future of Climate Change***

Table 5: Respondents' Perception of the Future of Climate Change

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>
Perception of the future of climate change	1. In the next 50 years, there will be more heat waves, droughts, and wildfires.	3.94
	2. In the next 50 years, we are going to experience energy supply issues.	4.09
	3. In the next 50 years, streets, tunnels, and roads will get more frequently flooded.	3.62
	4. In the next 50 years, we are going to experience more frequent and heavier storms.	3.65
	5. In the next 50 years, we are going to experience more frequent health issues and epidemics.	3.74
	6. In the next 50 years, (un)settled low-elevation coastal zones will get flooded due to storms and sea level rise.	3.71
	7. In the next 50 years, we are going to experience heavy rainfalls and landslides.	3.53

The overall score for all items in Table 5 shows a positive response with an average score of 3.75 (high). This indicates that the respondents are aware that climate change may cause severe problems in the future regarding the environment and energy supplies. Items (1), (3), (4), (5), and (6) obtained moderate responses with an average result of 3.5-3.9, whereas item (2) received a high s of 4.09. The result shows that the respondents are concerned about a future lack of energy resources. However, their responses to (1), (3), (4), (5), (6) implied that the respondents might not have a deep concern about heat weaves, droughts, and wildfires, floods, storms, health issues, and epidemics, sea level rise, heavy rainfalls, and landslides. The result may be surprising for everyday society, but it is not surprising for people in Sumba. The island is located in a tropical area, and the disasters mentioned above are typical. However, the interesting point is that the respondents show higher concern regarding energy supply issues. Similar to the global concern for the availability of energy supplies, the people in Sumba depend on energy sources for their daily activities.

### ***Interest in Climate Change***

Table 6: Respondents' Interest in Climate Change

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Average</b>
Interest in climate change	1. I would like to know more about climate change.	4.12
	2. I would like to know what I can do on my own for the environment and climate protection.	4.41
	3. I would like to influence the decisions regarding climate change.	3.44
	4. I am interested in how to influence climate protection through the international democratic decision-making process.	3.74

Dimensions	Item	Average
	5. I am not interested in problems related to climate change.	2.21

Table 6 shows that the majority of items in the dimension regarding interest in climate change gained relatively high scores with the average score for all items being 4.12 representing a high interest in the climate change issue. The respondents' positive results also show that they are motivated to explore any possibilities of mitigation efforts. Item (5), which was designed in negative expression gained a low score of 2.21. This response is in line with the other four items that show interest in climate change; and thus, represents that respondents are willing to act in the climate change mitigation and adaptation context.

### ***Concern for Ecological Problems***

Table 7: Respondents' Concerns for Ecological Problems

Dimensions	Item	Average
Concern for ecological problems	1. I am concerned about air pollution.	4.47
	2. I am concerned about the accumulation of hazardous waste.	4.47
	3. I am concerned about the influence of industry on the environment and people's health.	4.38
	4. I am concerned about the extraction, destruction, and pollution of natural resources (forests, water, soil, oil).	4.24
	5. I am concerned about the pollution of rivers, lakes, seas, and oceans.	4.38
	6. I am concerned about the pollution of food and drinking water (preservatives, additives, pesticides. . . )	4.50
	7. I am concerned about climate change in general.	4.50
	8. I am concerned about forest dieback.	4.44
	9. I am concerned about the inadequate disposal of municipal waste.	4.38
	10. I am concerned about the reduction of arable land (desertification, soil erosion, urbanization and traffic, sea level rise . . . ).	4.41

Table 7 shows that all items in the last dimension regarding concern for ecological problems received high scores, with average scores of 4.24 to 4.50. This result implies that the respondents highly care about ecological problems. However, they might need a trigger to manifest their concerns into real actions.

### **Conclusions**

The climate change crisis is inevitable and irreversible. The impacts on our environment and our future generations are ongoing. Unless serious attempts to take action regarding mitigations and adaptation exist, all living beings will face unavoidable disasters or extinction. The critical question is, *"Who is responsible for taking action?"* The answer may be simple and complex. It is the time for all individuals to take action, and language teachers are no exception. Having the privilege of accessing global connections, ELT professionals are perfect agents to raise awareness. As language teachers, ELT professionals also have the liberty to integrate the topic of climate change into their pedagogical practices. Language teachers can make changes at this personal level by inspiring and informing students and performing activities that serve to change (Maley, 2022).

However, promoting awareness of the climate change crisis is challenging. Although climate change has become a universal issue, teachers are still unfamiliar with how to educate their students about the topic. Most teachers are still bound to their old teaching paradigm of traditional didactic strategies (Papadimitriou, 2004). In this study, the overall result of the six dimensions showed an average score of 4.04. This result

shows that English language teachers in East Sumba have a positive perception of climate change issues and are willing to take action regarding adaptation and mitigation in the context of climate change. However, some items in the dimensions resulted in moderate and negative responses, implying that they might require additional encouragement to do so or that they may need support and guidance in forms of training to incorporate environmental education in the classrooms. This is in line with the results in Gürsoy and Saglam (2011), where teachers showed a strong tendency to participate in environmental education, but they do not feel like having adequate resources or knowledge on how to implement it in the classrooms.

The result of this present study is significant because it measures the attitudes and beliefs of the language teachers, which eventually influence their willingness to take action. Actions in this context not only mean contributing to solving the climate change impacts on the environment, but language teachers are also expected to spread awareness of the issues by integrating climate change topics into their courses. Therefore, the result of this study can be used as a consideration for policymakers to undertake programs aiming to raise teachers' awareness of environmental problems such as climate change and their capabilities to teach these topics. One of the alternatives can be integrating climate change education into teacher education programs for both social science and science education teachers. For instance, designing courses about climate change awareness may be helpful. Besides, pedagogical courses focusing specifically on the instructional skills for teaching environmental problems such as climate change may provide teachers with the competencies to teach climate change in science classrooms and social and humanities classroom contexts.

### For future studies

This study has collected data on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents regarding their age, school location, teaching experience, and familiarity with climate change issues. However, the correlation between those variables has yet to be investigated. Therefore, further studies may be required to examine whether socio-demographic characteristics influence language teachers' attitudes and beliefs on climate change topics.

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# **An Investigation of the Relationship between Deming Cycle and Good Governance Practices of the Support Services Division of Ramkhamhaeng University: A Correlational Study**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Good Governance (GG) is an important contributor towards sustainable development. In addition, administrator is essential in promoting Good Governance within higher education institutions. This paper aims to explore the Administration Conducts and their relationships with Good Governance Practices at the Support Service Division of Ramkhamhaeng University in Thailand. Deming Cycle for quality management (Plan-Do-Check-Act/Plan-Do-Study-Act) was operationalized into Administration Conducts (AC). Good Governance was measured using 10 components suggested by the Office of The Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC) namely, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Responsiveness, Accountability, Transparency, Participation, Decentralization, Rule of Law, Equity, and Consensus Oriented. Questionnaire was utilized to collect data from 177 personnel in the Support Services Division. Data revealed the overall GG means of 4.72 (SD = .366) on a 1 to 5 scale of measurement. The highest ranking was Transparency (mean = 4.79, SD = .324) and the lowest was Efficiency (mean = 4.45, SD = .446). Pearson's Correlation analysis revealed correlations among all AC and GG components. All items in the Administration Conducts were correlated at  $p < .000$  with Setting work plans based on the mission/strategy ( $r = .687$ ), Evaluation of workplans ( $r = .671$ ), Setting visions in accordance with the missions ( $r = .657$ ), Usage of the evaluation results to improve the operation ( $r = .648$ ), and Follow-up on the operation ( $r = .607$ ).

**Keywords:** Administration Conducts, PDCA, PDSA, Good Governance

## **Introduction**

The General Assembly of The United Nations has adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which aims to end poverty and hunger, realizes human rights, attain gender equity, empowerment of women, and protects natural resources (United Nations, 2015). The Thai government, as a member of the United Nations, has fully support the 2030 Agenda and has been progressing considerably achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (Division for Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations, 2021). Good governance is promoted as one of the most important tools towards sustainable development (Banerji, 2015). It involves the decision-making and implementation process (Sheng, 2009). This research project aimed to assess the relationship between Deming Cycle for quality management and Good Governance at the Building and Physical Plant Division of Ramkhamhaeng University.

Ramkhamhaeng University was established as a state-owned university since 1971. In the year 2024 the university is operating fourteen faculties plus one graduate school, seven Institutes and seven Offices. In addition to the main campus plus one extended campus in Bangkok, there are 23 regional campuses in the provinces. Forty-one examination centers are coordinated in 39 provinces in Thailand. Another forty-one examination centers are coordinated in 32 countries around the world. The university occupies 7,667,262 square meters of academic service area all over Thailand. This includes 62 buildings in the main campus and 75 buildings in the regional campuses (Ramkhamhaeng University, 2022).

The Support Services Division of Ramkhamhaeng University is responsible for the maintenance of the abovementioned buildings as well as the installed equipment and all infrastructure and facilities of the university with the budget allotment of about Baht 115 million or well over 3 million US dollars every year. The division hires more than 400 staff members to provide support services throughout the university

dividing into the Administrative, Building and Physical Plants, Vehicle and Technical Operations, Construction and Maintenance, and Welfare and Security Subdivisions.

This research's objective of this project was to assess the corporate governance of the Division through the administration conducts of the Vice President for Support Service Division (VP). Leadership is one of the major criteria in Balridge framework for quality assessment (Hertz, 2015). The effectiveness of leaders is an essential qualification of administrators which brings about the success of organizations, in this case, Good Governance.

All state-owned universities were once operated under the same set of government rules and regulations as other governmental agencies doing other services. Later on, the Thai government has released state-owned universities to operate autonomously under the supervision and budget allocations from the government. Hence, there is a call for good organizational governance to use the governmental budget appropriately. The Office of the Public Sector Development Commission or OPDC (2009) has devised the principles for New Public Management (NPM) and criteria to assess Public Sector Management Quality Award (PMQA) for government agencies to follow. Leadership is the first category to assess. Realizing the importance of leadership in the administration together with the importance of the Support Service Affairs Division of Ramkhamhaeng University, the research objective of this institutional research project was established in order to assess the perception of personnel towards the administration quality of the Vice President in charge of the Division.

## **Literature Review**

*Deming Cycle.* Edwards Deming adapted the 3-step Shewhart Cycle (Specification → Production → Inspection) into Deming Wheel (Design, Make, Sell, Test, and Re-design) in 1950. This wheel was further modified into the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle. In 1993, Deming modified the Shewhart cycle further into the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) cycle emphasizing learning and improvement (Moen and Norman, 2009). Ramkhamhaeng University has been adopting the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) cycle for continuous improvement in the administration. This becomes the Administration Conducts of the university.

*Good Governance Practice.* The Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC, 2009) has proposed 4 groups of principles for government agencies to assess the degree of Good Governance Practices namely: New Public Management, Democratic Value, Participatory State, and Administrative Responsibility. These groups include 10 principles to adhered to.

Firstly, New Public Management Approach consisting of Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Responsiveness principles. The effectiveness principle suggests the government agencies should establish strategic goals in providing common good. Systematic and standardized work process and budgets should be established in order to attain these strategic goals. In addition, the administration should utilize modern management techniques and tools in order to supervise the work process. The usage of resources should be cautiously optimized. Moreover, the responsiveness principle deems that the operations should aim at servicing and create trust and satisfaction among the stakeholders.

Secondly, the Democratic Value should be adhered to. The administration service should include Accountability, Transparency, Rule of Law, and Equity. Regarding Accountability, government agency should be responsible for the attainment of the goals and take the service users' opinions into their accounts. Information not prohibited by law should be able to disclose to the public upon request. Decisions should be supported by reasons. Rule of Laws should be observed and practices. Moreover, personnel should be treated equally.

Thirdly, the Participatory State principles include Participation and Consensus Oriented principles. Government agencies should allow stakeholders to share their opinions and participate in major decision-making process. Moreover, decisions should be consensus oriented after allowing relevant personnel to participate in determining the issues. Another principle is Decentralization of decision-making authority to personnel.

Lastly, the Administrative Responsibility principle refers to the maintenance of Morality and Ethics in operation.

## Methodology

Data were gathered through questionnaire consisting of 3 parts. Part I elicited general information of the respondents. Part II included 4 items assessed perceptions towards the Administration Conducts of the Vice President of Support Services Division, i.e., Planning included the setting up of vision and workplans in accordance with the missions and strategies of the Division; Follow-up of the strategy implementation; Study included evaluation and assessment of the workplans; and Act which meant the usage of evaluation results to improve the operation. Part III included 30 items assessing the respondent's perceptions towards the Division's compliance to Good Governance Practices represented by the respondents' perceptions regarding the VP's administration towards the 10 principles of Good Governance Practices set forth by the Public Sector Development Commission (OPDC). Five-point Likert scale was implemented to gauge the practices/compliance ranging from 1 refers to the least degree to 5 refers to the highest degree. The population was 177 personnel of the Division working in the year 2024. One hundred seventy-two respondents provided data through the questionnaire. Five personnel did not answer to the questionnaire. Data were analyzed using frequency and Means. Pearson's Correlation was used in order to test the relationship between practices and Good Governance compliance.

The mean scores were interpreted as follow:

4.81-5.00 = deemed as having/showing highest degree of practices/compliance

3.41-4.80 = deemed as having/showing high degree of practices/compliance

2.61-3.40 = deemed as having/showing medium degree of practices/compliance

1.81-2.60 = deemed as having/showing little degree of practices/compliance

1.00-1.80 = deemed as having/showing the least degree of practices/compliance

## Results

The general information of the respondents is presented in table 1.

Table 1: General Information of Respondents

	frequency	%
1. Gender		
Male	130	75.60
Female	42	24.40
Total	172	100.00
2. Subdivisions		
Administrative	17	9.90
Building and Physical Plants	76	44.20
Vehicle and Technical Operations	47	27.30
Construction and Maintenance	17	9.90
Welfare and Security	15	8.70
Total	172	100.00
3. Duration of work with the Division		
< 1 year	6	3.60
1-5 years	34	19.80
6-10 years	47	27.30
10-15 years	35	20.30
16-20 years	20	11.60
> 20 years	30	17.40
Total	172	100.00

Seventy-five-point six percent of the respondents were male, 24.40% were female. The majority works in the Building and Physical Plants Subdivision (44.20%) followed by Vehicle and Technical Operations (27.30%), Construction and Maintenance (9.90%), and Welfare and Security (8.70%) respectively. A little less than half had been working with the Division for more than 10 years. Most had worked with the Division for 6-10 years (27.30%) followed by 10-15 years (20.30%), 1-5 years (19.80%), more than 20 years (17.40%), 16-20 years (11.60%), and less than 1 year (3.60%) respectively.

#### Part 2: Perceived Administration Conducts of the Vice President of Support Services Division

Administration Practice	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Quality
1. Setting the Division's visions in accordance with the missions of the Division	4.81	.390	Highest
2. Setting work plans based on the mission/strategy of the Division	4.84	.364	Highest
3. Follow up the operations.	4.85	.353	Highest
4. Evaluate and assess all operational and implementation plans	4.80	.399	High
5. Usage of the evaluation results to improve the operation of the Division	4.81	.390	Highest
Total	4.82	.323	Highest

Table 2 suggests that the Perceived Administration Conducts of the Vice President for Support Services Division, the respondents reported that the overall means of the Vice President's administration conduct was at the highest degree ( $\bar{x} = 4.82$ , S.D. = .323). Low standard deviation suggested the respondents mostly agree with each other with little discrepancy. Item 3: the VP follow-up the operations had the highest mean score of 4.85 ( $\bar{x} = 4.85$ , S.D. = .353) followed by item 2 ( $\bar{x} = 4.84$ , S.D. = .364), 1 ( $\bar{x} = 4.81$ , S.D. = .390), 5 ( $\bar{x} = 4.81$ , S.D. = .390) and item 4 ( $\bar{x} = 4.80$ , S.D. = .399) respectively. Item 2 was regarding the VP's setting of work plans in line with the mission/strategy of the Division. Item 1 was that the VP's setting up of the vision in line with the goals of the Division. Item 5 showed that the VP had taken the evaluation results into consideration to improve the management of the Division. The lowest mean was item 4, i.e., the VP had evaluated and assessed all operational and implementation plans.

#### Part 3: Perceptions towards the Division's Compliance with the 10 Principles of Good Governance (GG) Practices

The Division has....	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
1. Effectiveness	4.78	.375	High
1.1 Clear strategic direction and objectives which were attained.			
1.2 Created a systematic and standardized work process.	4.77	.419	High
1.3 Monitored and evaluated performance and improved the operations continuously and systematically.	4.79	.408	High
	4.78	.412	High
2. Efficiency	4.45	.446	High
2.1 Good supervision approach.	4.77	.419	High
2.2 Utilized appropriate management techniques and tools and used budget effectively.	4.75	.430	High

The Division has....	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Interpretation
2.3 Utilized modern technology, tools and equipment to lower costs and time.	3.84	.881	High
3. Responsiveness	4.74	.422	High
3.1 Managed works to finish within the specified time period	4.75	.430	High
3.2 Created confidence and trust from relevant persons	4.74	.437	High
3.3 Responded to stakeholders' expectations and needs	4.73	.440	High
4. Accountability	4.74	.428	High
4.1 Responsibility in performing duties and performance towards set goals.	4.75	.434	High
4.2 Responsibility towards public problems	4.73	.440	High
4.3 Listened to stakeholders involved and taken corrective action.	4.74	.437	High
5. Transparency	4.79	.324	High
5.1 Disclosed and provided opportunity for personnel to investigate the management process and documents	4.96	.184	Highest
5.2 Provided access information not prohibited by law.	4.70	.455	High
5.3 Publicized information to relevant persons.	4.69	.460	High
6. Rule of Law	4.74	.411	High
6.1 Exercised laws, rules and regulations fairly and non-discriminately	4.74	.437	High
6.2 Provided an opportunity for personnel to express their opinions about rules and regulations.	4.75	.434	High
6.3 Disseminated and publicized news and legal issues relevant to benefits of personnel.	4.73	.440	High
7. Equity	4.74	.418	High
7.1 Taken into account the personnel or relevant departments to receive fair treatment.	4.75	.430	High
7.2 Provided equal service to all personnel.	4.73	.440	High
7.3 Included opinions of personnel to improve the management.	4.72	.446	High
8. Participation and Consensus Oriented	4.75	.388	High
8.1 Allowed personnel to be involved in decision-making and express their opinions.	4.80	.399	High
8.2 Followed stakeholders' decision-making.	4.73	.456	High
8.3 Listened to stakeholders to improve the operations.	4.73	.443	High
9. Decentralization	4.72	.423	High
9.1 Decentralized authority and responsibility for decision-making in operations to personnel.	4.72	.449	High
9.2 Assessed personnel's satisfaction towards the management.	4.73	.443	High
9.3 Included satisfaction assessment results to improve the administration.	4.72	.446	High
10. Administrative Responsibility	4.74	.427	High
10.1 Followed the principles of morality and ethics	4.75	.430	High
10.2 Complied to the public's expectation	4.73	.440	High
10.3 Adhered to civil servant's codes of ethics.	4.73	.440	High
Total	4.72	.366	High

Table 3 reports the respondents' perceptions regarding the Division's compliance with the GG practices. The overall mean was 4.72 and the standard deviation was .366 suggesting the respondents saw that the Division had maintained a high degree of GG compliance. The total mean scores of each practice ranged from 4.45-4.78 and the standard deviation ranged from .324 to .446. The highest being Transparency ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.82, S.D. = .323) followed by Participation and Consensus Oriented ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.75, S.D. = .388). Rule of Law (S.D. = .411), Equity (S.D. = .418), Responsiveness (S.D. = .422), Administrative Responsibility (S.D.

= .427), and Accountability (S.D. = .428) had equal mean scores of 4.74. The lowest being Efficiency ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.45, S.D. = .446).

Item 5.1 Disclosure and providing opportunity for personnel to investigate the management process and documents gained the highest score, i.e.,  $\bar{x}$  = 4.96 and S.D. = .184. The lowest standard deviation suggests that most respondents agree on this point. Item 2.3 the respondents perceived that the Division's utilization of modern technology, tools and equipment to lower costs and time was at the lowest degree ( $\bar{x}$  = .3.84, S.D. = .881).

A Pearson's Correlation analysis revealed that all practices were related to GG compliance of the Division. Table 4 shows the correlations between each of the Administration Practice and overall Good Governance Practice.

Table 4: Correlations between each Administration Conducts and each component of Good Governance

	Total										
	GG	Effct	Effcnt	Rspnsv	Acctblty	Trans	Rule	Equity	Parti	Decen	Rspnsbty
Vision	.657**	.614**	.458**	.610**	.611**	.568**	.561**	.588**	.539**	.550**	.567**
Workplan	.687**	.675**	.444**	.625**	.577**	.610**	.623**	.617**	.588**	.574**	.617**
Follow-up	.607**	.539**	.424**	.534**	.538**	.515**	.521**	.515**	.520**	.534**	.566**
Evaluate	.671**	.609**	.489**	.624**	.614**	.596**	.555**	.590**	.533**	.589**	.559**
Improve	.648**	.614**	.503**	.574**	.541**	.522**	.535**	.564**	.564**	.526**	.602**

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

All Administration Practice were significantly related to the overall Good Governance Practices at  $p < .000$  level. The correlations ranged from .687 for having work plans based on the mission/strategic plan of the Division ( $r = .687$ ) followed by the evaluation and assessment of all operational and implementation plans (.671), setting up of the vision in line with the goals of the Division ( $r = .657$ ), taking the evaluation results into consideration to improve the management of the Division ( $r = .648$ ), and follow-up of the operations ( $r = .607$ ) respectively. All Administration Conducts were related to each component of Good Governance at  $p < .000$  significance level. The highest was the relationship between Having Workplan and Effectiveness ( $r = .675$ ). The lowest relationship was the relationship between Follow-up and Efficiency ( $r = .424$ ). Thirty-three pairs were related in the medium level ( $r$  between .400-.600). Fourteen pairs had relationships in the high level (.600-.900).

## Discussion

The respondents, more or less, agreed that the VP had performed the Administration Conducts based on the PDSA cycle to the highest level of, i.e., create mission, workplans, follow-up, and use the evaluation results to improve the operation. Only the score of evaluation of the operations barely missed the highest-degree threshold, that is, the mean score was 4.80 which placed it into the high degree category when another .01 addition would place it into the highest degree category. This, however, shows that the VP had perform well with the Administration Conducts. Regarding the Good Governance Practices, all totals show the Division had complied to the Good Governance Practice at high level none at the highest level. The Pearson's Correlation reported high degree of correlations between each of the Administration Practices and the overall Good Governance Practice.

The itemize analysis revealed that Effectiveness was related the most with setting vision, having workplans, and utilization of the results to improve the operation. Responsiveness resulted from the evaluation of the operation. Administration Responsibility was related the most with follow-up.

Evidently, setting workplans based on the mission/strategic plan is related the most to GG in the Division. Setting workplans correlated with all components of GG, the highest was with Effectiveness. Having workplans correlated in the high degree with many of the GG's components, i.e., Effectiveness, Responsiveness, Rule of Law, Equity, Administration Responsibility, and Transparency respectively. Setting up workplans is involved directly with setting objectives and goals and the activities to attain those goals, hence, it is highly related to Effectiveness. Moreover, Responsiveness, Rule of Law, Equity, Administration Responsibility, and Transparency components could be reflected in the process of making workplans. Furthermore, setting workplans was related, in the medium degree, to Participation, Accountability, Decentralization, and Efficiency respectively. The VP seems to allow subordinates to be involved in the planning process and resulted in Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Responsiveness of the Division.

While the setting up of workplans correlated the most with Effectiveness, the Evaluation of the operations correlated highest with Responsiveness. Making plans could lead to Effectiveness. It is very likely that the process of evaluation made the Division realized the needs of stakeholders to be responded to and hence could modify their plan accordingly. Moreover, Evaluation corresponds to the Study stage in Deming cycle. It is likely that by opening to evaluation, the VP was opened for scrutinizing, hence, the Division was perceived as transparent and adhered to the Rule of Law.

This study illustrates the relationship between Administration Conducts based on the PDSA cycle and Good Governance Practices. It is evident that exercising administration duty appropriately would lead to Good Governance of an organization which would create sustainable development in the long run. Hence, Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle should be promoted among organizations.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Good Governance is very important to create sustainable development of organizations. Administrators should aim to respond to the needs of stakeholders and satisfy those needs effectively and efficiently. The process to satisfy those needs should be transparent and allow for stakeholders' participation and involvement in decision-making. Good Governance practices are related to the quality management process. Hence, by observing the GG practices, an organization could improve its quality in operations and bring the organization to long term success.

The results of this research support the implementation of Plan-Do-Study-Act process in order to promote Good Governance in organizations. Higher education institution should include PDSA cycle into their operations in order to attain Good Governance for sustainability Development further.

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# Assessing the Awareness, Utilization, Perceived Benefits, and Challenges of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools in Academic Writing among Graduate Students

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## ABSTRACT

The rapid evolution of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing academic writing practices, and this study investigates its impact on graduate students at a Philippine Catholic university. The research specifically assesses the awareness, utilization, and perceptions of Generative AI tools among 150 thesis and dissertation writers. The findings reveal a high degree of awareness and widespread utilization of these tools, with ChatGPT being particularly favored for tasks such as proofreading, brainstorming, and research. The perceived benefits of these tools include enhanced efficiency and accessibility, streamlining various aspects of the writing process. The study also uncovers that the primary sources of information about these tools are social media and peer networks. However, challenges persist, notably concerns about the potential erosion of critical thinking skills, the opacity of AI algorithms, and broader ethical considerations surrounding issues like plagiarism and bias in AI-generated content. The study further establishes a positive correlation between awareness and utilization of these tools, underscoring the need for targeted educational interventions that promote responsible AI Utilization. The research contributes valuable insights into the evolving landscape of AI in education, particularly within the Philippine context. It advocates for a balanced approach to AI integration in academia, empowering students to harness the benefits of AI tools while critically evaluating their outputs and upholding the principles of academic integrity. The study's findings emphasize the necessity for clear institutional policies, comprehensive training programs, and open dialogue to ensure that AI serves as a tool for enhancing academic exploration rather than replacing essential human skills and ethical considerations.

**Keywords:** Generative AI, academic writing, graduate students, , utilization

## Introduction

Generative AI, a transformative force in content creation, empowers computers to generate novel text formats with remarkable fidelity (Brown et al., 2020). The rapid rise of large language models like GPT-3 exemplifies this revolution (OpenAI, 2023), offering possibilities for enhanced efficiency and personalized content across industries. However, critical ethical considerations regarding human creativity, authorship, and potential biases remain (Brown et al., 2020).

In education, Generative AI holds immense promise for transforming the writing landscape. These tools offer personalized feedback, spark creativity, and foster critical thinking skills (Zhang et al., 2023; Shao et al., 2023; Liu, 2022). As these tools evolve, their integration has the potential to revolutionize the writing process, leading to a more personalized and efficient learning experience. However, academic writing, characterized by strict standards of originality and rigorous analysis (Wingate, 2018; Kellogg & Whiteford, 2020), presents a unique context for Generative AI. While it can streamline tasks like citation formatting, concerns persist about potential plagiarism, the undermining of critical thinking, and the propagation of inaccuracies (Androutsopoulos, 2023; Heaven, 2023). Successfully harnessing Generative AI in this context necessitates a nuanced understanding of its benefits and risks.

Graduate students, navigating high-stakes writing demands, offer a compelling population for investigating Generative AI Utilization in academic writing (Nelson et al., 2022). This study aims to specifically delve into the level of and extent of utilization of Generative AI tools among graduate students at a Catholic University in the Philippines, examining the relationship between and utilization, alongside the perceived

benefits and challenges. Exploring their experiences in this specific context can reveal cultural and educational factors influencing their attitudes and adoption of these tools.

This research addressed the existing literature gap by examining graduate students' awareness, utilization, perceived benefits, and challenges of Generative AI tools, aiming to inform ethical guidelines, pedagogy, and institutional policies for responsible AI Utilization in graduate education (Androutsopoulos, 2023; Zhang et al., 2023; Lancaster, 2023; Baker et al., 2023).

Hence, this research aimed to investigate the level of awareness and extent of utilization of Generative AI tools for academic writing among graduate students at a Philippine Catholic university. It further sought to identify perceived benefits and challenges associated with these tools, and to examine their correlation with both utilization and awareness.

## **Literature Review**

Graduate students are increasingly aware of generative AI tools for academic writing, driven by potential benefits like improved efficiency and language refinement (Dergaa et al., 2023). However, concerns persist around academic integrity, plagiarism, and authorship, requiring a multifaceted approach involving policy development, training, and detection methods, while also fostering critical thinking and human expertise (Cotton et al., 2023; Eke, 2023; Madhu et al., 2023; Dupps, 2023).

While AI can enhance efficiency and quality in academic writing, concerns about overreliance, plagiarism, and academic integrity remain (William, 2024; Plata et al., 2023; Song, 2024). Navigating this requires clear policies for ethical AI use, addressing biases, detection challenges, and equity concerns, along with a reevaluation of authorship and copyright, and adaptation of teaching methods (Delgado et al., 2024; Farrelly & Baker, 2023; Bozkurt, 2024; Yeo, 2023).

Research on Generative AI's utilization and impact in graduate education, particularly in academic writing, is still limited (Androutsopoulos, 2023; Lancaster, 2023). This knowledge gap, coupled with potential disciplinary differences and misconceptions about AI, necessitates further investigation and targeted educational efforts.

Despite a cautious approach, graduate students perceive substantial benefits in using Generative AI for academic writing, including enhanced efficiency, quality, and research capabilities (Androutsopoulos, 2023; Shao et al., 2023; Nelson et al., 2022; Heaven, 2023; Lancaster, 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). However, concerns about its potential negative impact on critical thinking, research skills, and ethical considerations persist (Heaven, 2023; Shao et al., 2023; Baker et al., 2023). A balanced approach is crucial, harnessing AI's benefits while upholding academic rigor and ethical standards. Addressing unequal access, developing updated guidelines, and rethinking assessment methods are key to ensuring responsible AI integration in academia. Continued research and dialogue remain essential in shaping AI's role in the future of academic writing.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study hypothesizes a positive relationship between awareness and utilization of Generative AI among graduate students, suggesting that addressing the knowledge gap could lead to wider adoption (Rogers, 2003; Davis, 1989). It is grounded in the Diffusion of Innovation Theory, which proposes that the spread of new technology occurs through stages of knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation (Rogers, 2003). In the context of the study, increased awareness of Generative AI's capabilities and potential benefits could influence graduate students' perception of its Utilizationfulness and ease of Utilization, thus impacting their decision to adopt and integrate these tools into their academic writing process. The study anticipates that a higher level of awareness will lead to greater utilization of Generative AI. Furthermore, the study draws upon the Technology Acceptance Model, which posits that perceived benefits and ease of utilization are key factors in technology adoption (Davis, 1989). By enhancing students' understanding of Generative AI's functionalities and user-friendliness, their perceived usefulness and ease of use can be improved, further encouraging utilization. Thus, the study proposes that

raising of Generative AI fosters a sense of its value and accessibility, ultimately leading to greater adoption among graduate students for academic writing.

## Methodology

This study employed a quantitative descriptive correlational research design to investigate graduate students' engagement with Generative AI tools in academic writing (Nelson et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). The respondents were the total population of 150 thesis and dissertation writers enrolled in the graduate school for the academic year 2023-2024, ensuring the study captured insights from graduate students engaged in complex academic writing and likely to have greater experience with writing support tools, including Generative AI.

A validated and reliability-tested researcher-made survey questionnaire was utilized to collect data on graduate students' awareness, utilization, perceived benefits, and challenges of generative artificial intelligence tools in academic writing. After securing institutional approval, informed consent was obtained from the participants, and the survey was administered through a secure online platform. Collected data was tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Spearman/rank biserial correlations, depending on the normality of the variables.

Table 1: Profile of the Graduate Students

Variables	f	%
Sex		
Male	47	31.3
Female	103	68.7
Age		
Baby Boomers (60-69)	34	22.7
Gen X (44-59)	80	53.3
Millennials (28-43)	33	22.0
Gen Z (12-27)	3	2.0
Graduate Program Level		
Master's	116	77.3
Doctor	34	22.7
Field of Study		
Business	44	29.3
Applied Science	17	11.3
Humanities and Social Science	89	59.3
Total	150	100.0

## Results and Discussion

### Awareness of Generative AI Tools in Academic Writing

*Awareness of Generative AI Tools for Academic Writing.* The majority (78.7%) of thesis and dissertation writers are aware of Generative AI tools for academic writing, suggesting a potential transformation in research output production (Smith & Johnson, 2023). This widespread may lead to increased AI Utilization, presenting both benefits and challenges. To navigate this, universities need clear AI Utilization policies, responsible integration training, and a focus on critical evaluation of AI-generated content (Wang et al., 2022; Anderson & Anderson, 2024; Brown, 2023), along with ongoing discussions on originality, plagiarism, and attribution in AI-assisted writing.

Table 2: Awareness of Generative AI Tools for Academic Writing

Awareness	f	%
Aware	118	78.7
Not aware	2	1.3
Somewhat aware	30	20.0

*Level of Awareness of Generative AI tools for Academic Writing.* While thesis and dissertation writers generally demonstrate a moderate awareness of Generative AI writing tools (M=3.35), variations exist across demographics, with higher observed among males, Generation X, doctoral students, and those in applied science fields (M=3.45, 3.44, 3.47, and 3.65, respectively). This highlights the need for tailored training initiatives within academic institutions, acknowledging that AI tool understanding varies based on various factors and necessitates a nuanced approach for optimal adoption and ethical Utilization (Smith & Johnson, 2023; Wang et al., 2022).

Table 3: Level of Awareness on Generative AI tools for Academic Writing

Variables	M	SD	Interpretation
Sex			
Male	3.45	0.90	High
Female	3.30	0.92	Moderate
Age			
Baby Boomers (60-69)	3.29	0.91	Moderate
Gen X (44-59)	3.44	0.94	High
Millennials (28-43)	3.24	0.87	Moderate
Gen Z (12-27)	2.67	0.58	Moderate
Graduate Program Level			
Master's	3.31	0.90	Moderate
Doctor	3.47	0.96	High
Field of Study			
Business	3.36	0.89	Moderate
Applied Science	3.65	0.79	High
Humanities and Social Science	3.28	0.94	Moderate
<i>As a whole</i>	3.35	0.91	Moderate

## Utilization of Generative AI Tools in Academic Writing

*Utilization of Generative AI Tools for Academic Writing.* The substantial majority (79%) of thesis and dissertation writers utilizing Generative AI tools in their academic writing processes highlights a significant shift in research output creation, underscoring the urgent need for proactive guidance from academic institutions (Anderson & Anderson, 2024; Wang et al., 2022). Universities should focus on developing clear AI policies, offering tailored training, and ensuring equitable access to prevent widening knowledge gaps.

Table 4: Utilization of Generative AI Tools for Academic Writing

Utilization	f	%
Yes	119	79.3
No	31	20.7

*Extent of Utilization of Generative AI tools for Academic Writing.* While thesis and dissertation writers generally utilize generative AI tools occasionally for specific tasks (M=2.82), Generation Z writers exhibit notably less frequent utilization (M=2.00), suggesting generational variations in adoption (Smith & Johnson, 2023). This highlights the need for universities to investigate reasons behind lower Gen Z utilization and tailor training and support initiatives to address their specific needs and hesitations.

Table 5: Extent of Utilization of Generative AI tools for Academic Writing

Variables	M	SD	Interpretation
Sex			
Male	2.94	1.22	Occasionally
Female	2.77	1.14	Occasionally
Age			
Baby Boomers (60-69)	3.03	1.00	Occasionally
Gen X (44-59)	2.84	1.08	Occasionally
Millennials (28-43)	2.64	1.48	Occasionally

Gen Z (12-27)	2.00	1.00	Seldom
Graduate Program Level			
Master's	2.80	1.14	Occasionally
Doctor	2.88	1.25	Occasionally
Field of Study			
Business	2.64	1.24	Occasionally
Applied Science	3.12	1.05	Occasionally
Humanities and Social Science	2.85	1.14	Occasionally
<i>As a whole</i>	2.82	1.16	Occasionally

*Academic Writing Task Utilizing Generative AI Tools.* Thesis and dissertation writers primarily utilized Generative AI tools for proofreading and editing (38%), along with brainstorming ideas and researching information (36% each), demonstrating the value they see in these tools for both editorial refinement and creative aspects of writing. Other common utilization cases include generating drafts, creating citations and references, and outlining (28%, 26.7%, and 24%, respectively). These findings suggest that academic institutions should tailor training to emphasize both the benefits and limitations of AI for these diverse tasks, promoting critical evaluation of AI-generated output (Brown, 2023).

Table 6: Academic Writing Task Utilizing Generative AI Tools

Tasks	f	%	Rank
Proofreading and editing	57	38.0	1
Brainstorming ideas	54	36.0	3.5
Researching and collecting information	54	36.0	3.5
Generating drafts	42	28.0	4
Citation and reference formatting	40	26.7	5
Outlining	36	24.0	6

## Perceived Benefits of Utilization of Generative AI Tools in Academic Writing

Thesis and dissertation writers perceive significant benefits in utilizing generative AI tools for various academic writing needs ( $M=3.35$ ), including core writing tasks, research support, improved accessibility, and learning enhancement ( $M=3.35$ ). This positive outlook suggests AI's potential to streamline tasks and enhance the writing process. To fully harness these benefits, universities should establish a proactive framework for AI integration, including comprehensive training programs emphasizing both technical utilization and critical evaluation skills (Brown, 2023; Wang et al., 2022). Additionally, clear guidelines outlining responsible AI Utilization, addressing attribution, biases, and scholarly control, are crucial for fostering ethical adoption and upholding academic integrity (Anderson & Anderson, 2024; Uzun, 2023).

Table 7: Perceived Benefits of Utilizing Generative AI Tools in Academic Writing

Variables	Core Writing Tasks			Research Support			Accessibility and Learning			Other Perceived Benefits			Whole		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex															
Male	3.43	0.64	MB	3.33	0.55	MB	3.26	0.49	MB	3.26	0.66	MB	3.32	0.53	MB
Female	3.52	0.50	MB	3.37	0.61	MB	3.28	0.59	MB	3.26	0.63	MB	3.36	0.51	MB
Age															
Baby Boomers	3.47	0.54	MB	3.12	0.56	PB	3.18	0.42	PB	3.09	0.64	PB	3.21	0.43	PB
Gen X	3.48	0.59	MB	3.39	0.60	MB	3.27	0.59	MB	3.26	0.65	MB	3.35	0.55	MB
Millennials	3.58	0.47	MB	3.53	0.56	MB	3.38	0.64	MB	3.43	0.62	MB	3.48	0.50	MB
Gen Z	3.33	0.33	MB	3.56	0.51	MB	3.22	0.19	PB	3.22	0.38	PB	3.33	0.30	MB
Program Level															
Master's	3.48	0.57	MB	3.30	0.61	MB	3.24	0.58	PB	3.25	0.64	PB	3.32	0.53	MB
Doctor	3.53	0.48	MB	3.55	0.46	MB	3.36	0.48	MB	3.28	0.65	MB	3.43	0.45	MB
Field of Study															
Business	3.48	0.54	MB	3.32	0.59	MB	3.25	0.63	PB	3.22	0.69	PB	3.32	0.55	MB
Applied Science	3.53	0.57	MB	3.47	0.57	MB	3.31	0.64	MB	3.51	0.54	MB	3.46	0.53	MB
Hum & Soc Sci	3.49	0.55	MB	3.36	0.60	MB	3.27	0.52	MB	3.23	0.63	PB	3.34	0.49	MB

As a whole	3.49	0.55	MB	3.36	0.59	MB	3.27	0.56	MB	3.26	0.64	MB	3.35	0.51	MB
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Note: MB=Major Benefit; PB=Potential Benefit

## Perceived Challenges in the Utilization of Generative AI Tools in Academic Writing

While generative AI tools offer potential benefits for thesis and dissertation writers, concerns persist around critical thinking skills, control and transparency of AI models, and broader ethical considerations (Uzun, 2023; Yang et al., 2023; Wendell & Douglas, 2021; Tian et al., 2023). Additional challenges include the potential for AI to create a knowledge gap, the rapid evolution of AI technology making guideline development difficult, and the need to re-evaluate assessment methods and student competency definitions in the context of AI assistance. Universities must proactively address these challenges by fostering open dialogue, establishing clear guidelines, and providing training on critical evaluation and responsible AI use to ensure AI enhances academic exploration without compromising core principles (Anderson & Anderson, 2024; Chen et al., 2023).

Table 8: Perceived Challenges in the Utilization of Generative AI Tools in Academic Writing

Variables	Critical Thinking Skills			Control & Transparency			Ethical Considerations			Other Challenges			Whole		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex															
Male	3.13	0.72	MC	2.90	0.79	MC	3.09	0.82	MC	2.97	0.83	MC	3.02	0.73	MC
Female	3.05	0.67	MC	2.93	0.78	MC	3.21	0.77	MC	3.12	0.71	MC	3.08	0.65	MC
Age															
Baby Boomers	3.06	0.78	MC	2.85	0.86	MC	3.11	0.85	MC	3.10	0.77	MC	3.03	0.74	MC
Gen X	3.08	0.64	MC	2.90	0.73	MC	3.24	0.73	MC	3.01	0.73	MC	3.06	0.62	MC
Millennials	3.05	0.75	MC	3.02	0.85	MC	3.09	0.89	MC	3.14	0.79	MC	3.08	0.76	MC
Gen Z	3.11	0.38	MC	3.33	0.58	CC	3.00	0.67	MC	3.78	0.19	CC	3.31	0.19	CC
Program Level															
Master's	3.08	0.68	MC	2.91	0.77	MC	3.16	0.75	MC	3.06	0.74	MC	3.05	0.65	MC
Doctor	3.04	0.72	MC	2.97	0.85	MC	3.24	0.91	MC	3.12	0.80	MC	3.09	0.76	MC
Field of Study															
Business	3.08	0.65	MC	3.07	0.72	MC	3.23	0.77	MC	3.20	0.69	MC	3.15	0.62	MC
Applied Science	3.24	0.69	MC	3.00	0.79	MC	3.20	0.65	MC	3.08	0.73	MC	3.13	0.63	MC
Hum & Soc Sci	3.03	0.71	MC	2.84	0.81	MC	3.14	0.83	MC	3.01	0.78	MC	3.00	0.71	MC
As a whole	3.07	0.69	MC	2.92	0.78	MC	3.17	0.79	MC	3.07	0.75	MC	3.06	0.67	MC

Note: CC=Critical Concern; MC=Major Concern

## Relationship between demographics and of Generative AI Tools

Despite recent studies indicating generally positive attitudes towards Generative AI in academia, with students recognizing its potential benefits (Al-Zahrani, 2023; Ghimire et al., 2024; Chan & Hu, 2023), this specific study found no significant relationship between demographic factors (sex, age, or graduate program level) and of such tools. This suggests that is evenly distributed across various demographics within the academic community, contrasting some findings of gendered utilization patterns (Nyaaba et al., 2024; Strzelecki & ElArabawy, 2024). The predominantly positive outlook on GenAI, coupled with the widespread found in this study, highlights its promising role in academia, while also emphasizing the need for ongoing ethical considerations and appropriate support structures as its integration continues (Chan & Hu, 2023; Nyaaba et al., 2024; Al-Zahrani, 2023; Dergaa et al., 2023).

Table 9: Relationship between demographics and of Generative AI Tools

	$\rho$	df	p
Sex	-0.070	148	0.397
Age	-0.059	148	0.477
Graduate Program Level	0.089	148	0.281
Business	0.015	148	0.857
Humanities and Social Science	-0.093	148	0.259

Note: correlation is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$

## Relationship between demographics and frequency of utilization of Generative AI tools

Research findings indicate that the Utilization of Generative AI tools in academic writing is not significantly impacted by factors such as gender, age, graduate program level, or field of study. This widespread adoption across diverse demographics and disciplines highlights the potential of these tools to democratize and enhance academic writing practices (Yusuf et al., 2024; Morande, 2023). Benefits include enhanced research efficiency, personalized learning, and broader accessibility (Dergaa et al., 2023; Dogru et al., 2023). However, ethical considerations regarding academic integrity, authorship, and potential biases remain crucial (Bozkurt, 2024; Farrelly & Baker, 2023). To ensure responsible and effective AI integration in academia, researchers recommend comprehensive policies, AI literacy programs, and transparency, thus mitigating risks like misinformation while maximizing the potential for improved learning and research outcomes (Lin, 2023; Mahama et al., 2023).

Table 10: Relationship between demographics and frequency of utilization of Generative AI tools

Frequency of Utilization	$\rho$	df	p
Sex	-0.075	148	0.360
Age	-0.094	148	0.252
Graduate Program Level	0.008	148	0.922
Business	-0.112	148	0.173
Humanities and Social Science	0.031	148	0.702

Note: correlation is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$

## Relationship between perceived benefits, challenges, and utilization of Generative AI Tools in academic writing

This study confirms that both perceived benefits and challenges of GenAI, along with awareness, influence its utilization, aligning with previous research (Ghimire et al., 2024; Holechek & Sreenivas, 2024; Baidoo-Anu & Ansah, 2023; Bies et al., 2024). While GenAI offers opportunities, concerns about ethics, accuracy, and human oversight necessitate responsible integration (Al-Zahrani, 2023; Yusuf et al., 2024). Perceived benefits drive utilization, but challenges like accuracy concerns can influence frequency of utilization (Wang et al., 2024; Yeralan & Lee, 2023). Addressing these challenges through education, transparency, and development is crucial for fostering trust and wider utilization, especially in education where ethical guidelines and critical evaluation are essential (Fegade et al., 2023; Preiksaitis & Rose, 2023).

Table 11A: Relationship between perceived benefits and utilization of Generative AI tools in academic writing

Variable	$\rho$	df	p
Benefits	0.464*	148	0.000

Note: \*correlation is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$

Table 11B: Relationship between challenges and utilization of Generative AI tools in academic writing

Variable	$\rho$	df	p
Challenges	-0.253*	148	0.002

Note: \*correlation is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$

Table 11C: Relationship between awareness and utilization of Generative AI tools in academic writing

Variable	$\rho$	df	p
Awareness	0.393*	148	0.000

Note: \*correlation is significant when  $p \leq 0.05$



Overall, the findings reveal the dynamic landscape of Generative AI integration in academic writing among graduate students. The widespread awareness and utilization of tools like ChatGPT underscore their transformative potential, particularly for tasks like proofreading, brainstorming, and research. The perceived benefits, including enhanced efficiency and accessibility, highlight the positive impact on the writing process. However, challenges persist, notably concerns about critical thinking skills, transparency, and ethical considerations. The positive correlation between awareness, perceived benefits, and utilization emphasizes the need for proactive guidance from academic institutions. This includes clear policies, comprehensive training programs, and open dialogue to ensure responsible AI utilization that fosters academic exploration while upholding academic integrity. The study's insights contribute to the ongoing discourse on AI in education, advocating for a balanced approach that empowers students to harness AI's benefits while critically evaluating its outputs and maintaining ethical standards.

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# Blended Learning Perspectives: Innovating Education with University of Sto-Tomas Legazpi Graduate Students

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the perspectives of graduate students' on the implementation of blended learning modality at UST-Legazpi to innovate education through the integration of traditional and digital learning methods. The researchers utilized a mixed-methods approach and investigated the effectiveness, challenges, and benefits of blended learning from the students' viewpoints. The study was anchored in constructivist learning theory, connectivism learning theory, and social learning theory. The study, which involved surveys and interviews, revealed that blended learning, despite its flexibility and accessibility, also has limitations such as the need for enhanced digital literacy and technological challenges. The study provides recommendations for policy development and the adoption of effective strategies to improve the blended learning experience for graduate students. This study adds to the expanding pool of information on blended learning in higher education, offering valuable perspectives for educators and policymakers striving to innovate and enhance educational results.

**Keywords:** Blended Learning, Innovating Education, Graduate Students

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of technology has ushered in a transformative era in education, marked by the integration of digital tools and innovative pedagogies. Blended learning is at the forefront of this educational revolution, a modality that seamlessly merges traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning experiences. This approach leverages the strengths of both modes, offering students flexibility, personalized learning opportunities, and access to a wealth of digital resources (Maarop & Embi, 2016). As institutions worldwide grapple with the challenges of preparing students for the 21st-century workforce, blended learning has emerged as a promising avenue for fostering student engagement, enhancing learning outcomes, and cultivating the digital literacy skills essential for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

Implementing blended learning modalities has gained significant traction in recent years, driven by recognizing its potential to innovate education. Research has shown that blended learning can lead to improved student performance, increased motivation, and greater satisfaction with the learning experience (Syahrawati, Susantini, & Indana, 2022). Moreover, this approach empowers educators to tailor instruction to individual student needs, providing timely feedback and support while fostering a collaborative and interactive learning environment that keeps students engaged and connected. However, implementing blended learning requires careful planning, adequate technological infrastructure, and ongoing professional development for educators (Bansig, 2021).

Blended learning in graduate education provides unique opportunities to cater to the diverse needs of adult learners. Graduate students often juggle multiple responsibilities, including work and family commitments, making the flexibility of blended learning particularly appealing. By providing access to online resources, asynchronous discussions, and virtual collaboration tools, blended learning enables graduate students to engage with course content at their own pace and participate in meaningful interactions with peers and faculty regardless of geographical constraints (Lakhal et al., 2017). Furthermore, this modality facilitates the development of essential skills such as self-directed learning, critical thinking, and digital

communication, which are vital for success in today's knowledge-based economy. The Graduate School department at the University of Sto. Tomas – Legazpi employs a blended learning modality, which combines face-to-face classroom interaction with online learning. There was no research on the implementation of blended learning from the perspective of graduate students. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the perspectives of graduate students on implementing blended learning within their academic programs. Specifically, the study seeks to determine the perceived effectiveness of blended learning, identify the challenges students face, and explore areas for improvement in implementing this modality. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on blended learning by examining these aspects. It provides valuable insights for educators and institutions seeking to optimize the use of technology in higher education.

## Research Objectives

The study determined students' perspectives of blended learning modality in UST – Legazpi Graduate School. Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

- (1) Determine the students' perspectives on the effectiveness of implementation blended learning.
- (2) Determine the challenges experienced by the students, and
- (3) Identify areas for improvement in the implementation of blended learning.

## Framework of the Study

Three complementary learning theories – constructivist-connectivism, and social – form the foundation of this study on blended learning perspectives among University of Sto-Tomas Legazpi graduate students. These theories highlight how various factors, such as *student engagement, learning outcomes, technological infrastructure, accessibility, communication, students services, and flexibility*, contribute to the success of blended learning environment.

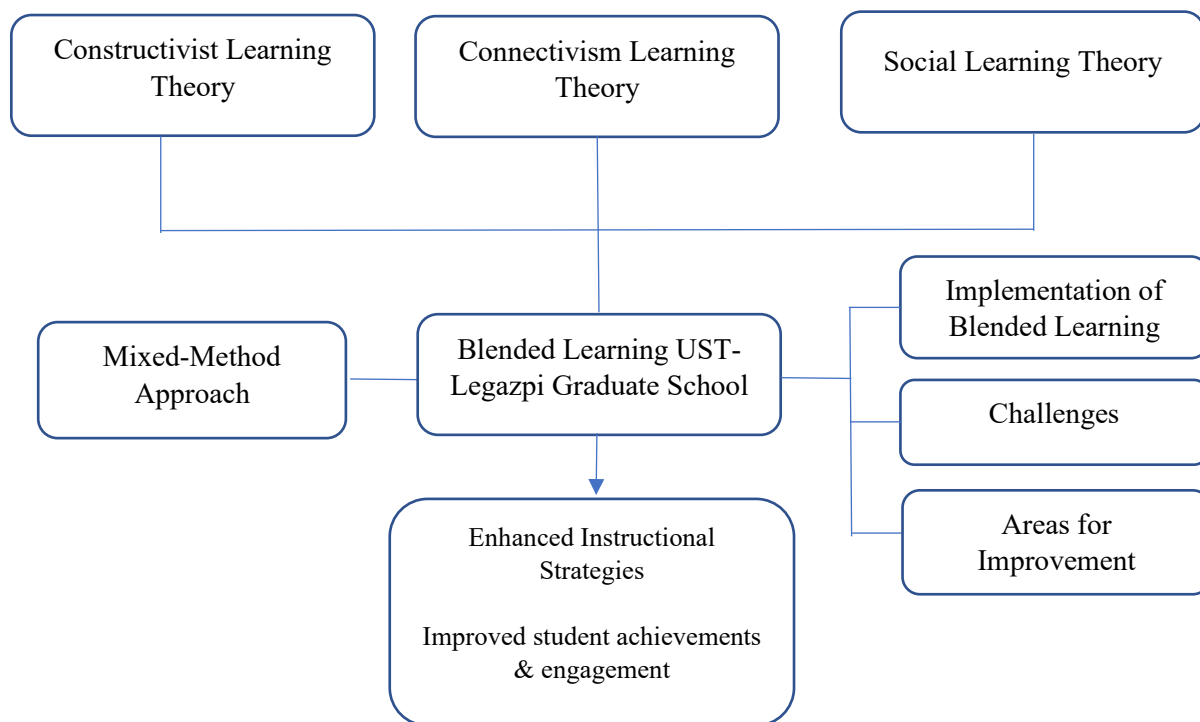
Constructivist Learning Theory, developed by theorists like Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, posits that learners actively construct knowledge through their experiences and interactions with their environment (McLeod, 2024). This theory supports the idea that students build their understanding through a combination of online and face-to-face experiences in the context of blended learning. This aligns with our study's objective to determine the effectiveness of blended learning implementation, as it suggests that the diverse experiences offered by blended learning can enhance knowledge construction.

George Siemens proposed the Connectivism Learning Theory, which underscores the importance of technology and the distribution of knowledge across networks in the digital age. This theory is particularly relevant to our study of blended learning, which inherently involves digital technologies and networked learning (Alam, 2023). Connectivism helps explain how students navigate and learn in the digital aspects of blended learning environments, relating to our objectives of understanding the challenges students face and identifying areas for improvement in blended learning implementation.

The Social Learning Theory, formulated by Albert Bandura, highlights the significance of seeing and imitating the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional responses of others in the process of acquiring knowledge (Cherry, 2024). In blended learning, this theory underscores the value of both online and face-to-face social interactions in the learning process. This relates to our study's focus on student perspectives, as it suggests that the social aspects of blended learning, both online and in-person, play a crucial role in the learning experience.

These theories collectively provide a framework for understanding how students engage with and perceive blended learning. The constructivist perspective helps us understand how students build knowledge in diverse learning environments. Connectivism provides insights into how students learn in digital spaces, which is crucial for understanding the online components of blended learning. Social learning theory helps explain the importance of interactions in both online and face-to-face settings.

By applying these theories to our study of blended learning perspectives among graduate students, researchers can better interpret the effectiveness of blended learning implementation, understand the challenges students face, and identify areas for improvement. This theoretical framework aligns with the research objectives and helps contextualize the results within established educational theories, providing a solid foundation for innovating education through blended learning at the University of Sto-Tomas Legazpi.



### Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate graduate students' perspectives on blended learning at the University of Sto-Tomas Legazpi. The research was grounded in three key learning theories: constructivist learning theory, connectivism learning theory, and social learning theory. The research utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods.

The three learning theories played a crucial role in shaping the research objectives and guiding the selection of key variables for investigation. Constructivist learning theory emphasizes the learners' role in constructing knowledge. To assess the effectiveness of blended learning from this perspective, the study looked at variables such as *student engagement and learning outcomes*. High engagement and the demonstration of meaningful learning would suggest alignment with constructivist principles. To pinpoint areas for *improvement*, the research considered whether the blended model adequately supported active learning, inquiry, and reflection, thus influencing the focus on *teaching effectiveness*.

The connectivism learning theory emphasizes the role of technology and networks in learning process. The study examined variables like *technological infrastructure*, *accessibility*, and *communication* to gauge the *effectiveness* of the blended model in facilitating connections and knowledge sharing, as emphasized by connectivism. Challenges related to technology access or online communication could signal areas for improvement from a connectivist perspective.

Social learning theory underscores the importance of social interaction and collaboration. The research investigated variables such as *student support services*, *flexibility*, and *communication* to evaluate how well

the blended format fostered a sense of community and supported social learning. This directly relates to evaluating the implementation's effectiveness.

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

Data was primarily gathered through a questionnaire administered to 265 graduate school students of UST – Legazpi using Google Forms. The retrieval rate was 84.15%, or 223 out of 265. Interviews and personal observations were also conducted as verification devices to support and clarify the results obtained from the survey.

The research tool was a self-made questionnaire based on several studies and literature, drawing insights from online resources such as [onlinelearningconsortium.org](https://onlinelearningconsortium.org). The questionnaire underwent validation via pilot testing, in which feedback and recommendations gathered during the process were considered in the instrument's finalization.

Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts and weighted means, interpreted on a 4-point Lickert scale. Qualitative data from open-ended questions and interviews was thematically analyzed to provide deeper insights into student perspectives. The mean responses were interpreted using the scale as follows:

Table 1: Interpretation Rating

Rating	Interpretation	Adjectival Description	Range Scale
4	Very effective	The blended learning approach is extremely successful in achieving its goals.	3.26 – 4.00
3	Effective	The blended learning approach works well and achieve positive results.	2.51 – 3.25
2	Ineffective	The blended learning approach has shortcomings and does not fully meet its goals.	1.76 – 2.50
1	Very ineffective	The blended learning approach is largely unsuccessful and needs significant improvements.	1.00 – 1.75

Furthermore, frequency and percentage were applied to identify the challenges experienced by the students in blended learning.

### *Scope and Limitations*

The study specifically focused on the perspectives of graduate students at UST-Legazpi during the 2023 – 2024 Academic Year. While this offers valuable insight into their experiences, the findings may not be generalized to other institutions or student populations. Future research could expand to include the perspectives of instructors/professors and administrators for a more holistic understanding.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study revealed the following results:

1. The perspectives among University of Sto. Tomas Legazpi graduate students on the implementation of blended learning modality reveal consistently positive outcomes, with a grand mean of 3.54 interpreted as "highly effective." Flexibility emerged as the highest-rated aspect (3.71), followed by teaching effectiveness and communication (3.60), suggesting that students value the adaptability of blended learning and that instructors have successfully adapted their methods to this format. Accessibility (3.56), Learning Outcomes (3.54), and Student Support Services (3.52) also scored well, indicating ease of access to resources, achievement of educational goals, and adequate student assistance. While still rated highly



effective, student engagement (3.37) received the lowest score, potentially highlighting an area for improvement.

These results imply that blended learning is well-received and successful in this context, potentially justifying its expansion or further integration into the university's educational approach. The high effectiveness across variables suggests that this model is meeting graduate students' needs and could serve as an example for other institutions considering similar initiatives. Flexibility emerged as the most highly rated aspect (3.71), implying that the students appreciate the personalized learning experience and convenience of the blended learning modality. This result aligns with research findings that flexibility in time, place, and content can positively impact students' satisfaction and learning outcomes (Akçay, A, 2023).

However, the relatively lower score in student engagement (3.37), may indicate a need for more interactive elements or community-building activities within the blended learning framework. This result highlights the importance of active participation and interaction in the online components of blended learning modality, as well as the need for professors to explore additional strategies to foster these elements, thereby improving the overall learning experience.

Respondents' feedback includes statements such as *“Incorporate elements such as quizzes, polls, simulations, and branching scenarios to make the learning more engaging and immersive. Interactive content creation is crucial for blended learning initiatives as it enhances engagement, retention, and overall learning outcomes; new teaching techniques; and elements like quizzes, polls or simulations can be incorporated”*. This feedback indicates a strong preference for incorporating interactive elements and innovative teaching techniques to make blended learning more engaging and impactful. It underscores the importance of creating a dynamic learning environment that caters to the diverse needs and preferences of learners.

The findings indicate that blended learning at the University of Sto. Tomas Legazpi has a positive impact on graduate students, with room for minor enhancements to further improve the educational experience.

Table 2: Results on the effectiveness of blended learning modality

Variables	Mean Score	Interpretation
Student Engagement	3.37	Highly effective
Learning Outcomes	3.54	Highly effective
Accessibility	3.56	Highly effective
Teaching Effectiveness	3.60	Highly effective
Student Support Services	3.40	Highly effective
Flexibility	3.71	Highly effective
Communication	3.60	Highly effective
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>Highly effective</b>

Many students highlighted the flexibility and convenience of blended learning as its most compelling aspects. They mentioned that it allows them to manage their time better, attend classes even when they cannot be physically present, and accommodate their work schedules. One student noted, *"Time Management because even if I am not physically ready to attend the class, I can still be in the class on time."* Another emphasized, *"Blended learning offers flexibility for students like me to engage with materials at our own pace and on our own time."*

Several students appreciated the online learning tools and platforms used. They mentioned Google Classroom, Gmail, Zoom, and the university dashboard. One student said, *"The most effective blended learning implementation at USTLegazpi is having google classroom, gmail, zoom and dashboard."*

Many students praised the combination of online and face-to-face learning. Students valued having both modalities available. As one student put it, *"For me the most effective blended learning implementation is using google classroom and at the same time face to face classes."*

Accessibility and inclusivity were essential to some students. They noted that blended learning provides opportunities for those with geographical constraints or different learning paces. One student mentioned that *"The online classes because it gives opportunity to those students who are willing to learn but with less accessibility due to geographical constraints."*

Several students pointed out how blended learning enhanced their learning experience. They mentioned benefits like engaging discussions, enterprise visits for professional growth, and visual aids for faster learning. One student shared, *"The conduct of enterprise visit enriched my professional growth by giving me the opportunity to observe how businesses operate."*

Some students appreciated how blended learning helped develop digital skills, for professors and students. They noted that professors possess strong digital literacy skills, which enhance the learning experience. Some students mentioned improved communication and organization. They found the posting of schedules and activities to be efficient. A few students pointed out the cost-effectiveness of blended learning, particularly in saving money on travel expenses.

It is worth noting that while most students found aspects of blended learning effective, some preferred specific modalities. Some favored face-to-face learning for better focus and interaction, while others preferred online learning for its benefits.

The responses indicate that students find the flexibility, combination of learning modalities, and use of technology to be the most effective aspects of blended learning at UST-Legazpi.

2. The survey reveals several significant challenges faced in blended learning at the University of Sto. Tomas Legazpi. The top five challenges are:

- a. Occasional technical issues can arise during online sessions (90.13%).
- b. The availability and reliability of internet connections (84.30 %).
- c. Maintaining academic integrity in online assessments can be a concern (68.16%).
- d. Participation of students in online activities (59.19 %).
- e. Access to necessary devices (computers, tablets, etc.) for online learning (51.57%).

The most prevalent challenge, technical issues during online sessions, affects over 90% of respondents, and Internet connectivity problems (84.30%) suggest that the technological infrastructure supporting blended learning needs significant improvement. These issues can disrupt learning continuity and impact the overall effectiveness of the blended learning approach. Technical issues, such as connectivity problems and software glitches, disrupt teaching and learning processes (Mesuwini & Mokoena, 2024).

Maintaining academic integrity in online assessments is a concern for 68.16% of respondents, indicating a need for robust systems and policies to ensure a fair and honest evaluation in the online environment. This challenge highlights the importance of developing innovative assessment methods suited to the blended format. Studies have identified various forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, collusion, and contract cheating (Garg & Goel, 2022).

Table 3 illustrates the challenges experienced in the implementation of blended learning.

Table 3: Challenges encountered in blended learning

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
1. Occasional technical issues during online sessions.	201	90.13%
2. The availability and reliability of internet connection.	188	84.30 %
3. Maintaining academic integrity in online assessments.	152	68.16 %
4. Participation of students in online activities varies.	132	59.19 %
5. Access to necessary devices (computers, tablets, etc.) for online learning.	115	51.57 %
6. Creating engaging online content requires additional effort and resources.	99	44.39 %
7. The availability of support resources for online learners.	89	39.91 %
8. Maintaining motivation in the online environment.	77	34.53%
9. Designing effective collaborative activities for blended learning.	68	30.49 %
10. Professors proficiency with technology for teaching and learning.	65	29.15 %
11. The timeliness and quality of feedback in the online environment.	57	25.56 %
12. Ensuring clear and effective communication with student.	55	24.66 %
13. User-friendliness of the learning management system (LMS).	45	20.17%
14. Tracking student progress across both modalities requires careful coordination.	44	19.73 %
15. Time management and self-regulation of the students.	19	8.05 %

The varying level of student participation in online activities (59.19%) suggests that engagement remains a crucial issue in the online component of blended learning. This result aligns with the earlier finding of student engagement, which had the lowest score among effectiveness measures, reinforcing the need for strategies to boost online participation and interaction. According to Mesuwini and Mokoena (2024), limited interaction and collaboration in virtual settings pose additional challenges.

Lastly, access to necessary devices for online learning is a challenge for over half of the respondents (51.57%). This finding points to potential inequities in the student population's ability to fully engage with the blended learning model, which could impact learning outcomes and the overall educational experience. Access and equity issues, including inadequate technology and internet access, hinder full participation (Mesuwini & Mokoena, 2024).

Results regarding the challenges that students experienced suggest that, even though blended learning is generally well-received, technical and infrastructure issues require attention. Improving internet connectivity, providing access to necessary devices, and enhancing the reliability of online platforms should be prioritized. Additionally, developing strategies to maintain academic integrity, boost online engagement, and ensure equitable access to resources is crucial for the continued success and improvement of the blended learning model at the university.

3. Student feedback reveals several key areas for improvement in the blended learning setup. Technical infrastructure and support emerge as primary concerns, with students noting, *"Consistent power failure or internet disconnectivity hinder the effectiveness of blended learning,"* emphasizing the need for better internet connectivity and addressing power outages. As one student suggested, the learning management system needs enhancements such as *"LMS maximization"* and ensuring access to necessary devices for all. These technical aspects are crucial, as they form the foundation of effective online learning.

Faculty digital competence is another significant area, with one respondent stating, *"Not all professors have strong digital knowledge."* This result highlights the need for faculty training in online teaching methods to ensure engaging and effective virtual sessions.

Scheduling and flexibility require attention, particularly for working students, as one comment suggests: *"The university must have special considerations to those students who are working outside Legazpi in times of Face-to-Face class."* This feedback suggests better planning of face-to-face classes and balancing online and in-person components.

A recurring theme in blended learning is student engagement and interaction, with one student suggesting *"to maintain a close interaction activity with the students to have an active class and always turn on the camera."* There is also a desire for diverse learning experiences, as evidenced by the suggestion for *"Provision for a differentiated learning like field/community immersion; attendance to fora/symposium; socials for students and faculty."* Assessment and feedback mechanisms require improvement, with one student noting, *"One significant area for improvement in blended learning setups is the timely provision of feedback on student submissions. Delayed or untimely feedback can hinder student learning."* Another suggests, *"Timely feedback of checked/received outputs posted online. With this, the student will know their status of subject requirements."* Despite the general acceptance of blended learning, these findings suggest potential for improvement. As one student aptly puts it, *"blended classroom gives both students and teachers the opportunity to use digital tools to significantly improve the learning experience."* Addressing these areas could lead to a more robust, engaging, and effective blended learning environment that better caters to the diverse needs of the student population.

The researchers also asked the respondents what additional features or support in the blended learning setup would further enhance their learning experience.

Graduate students at the University of Santo Tomas Legazpi offered various suggestions to enhance their blended learning experience. Many focused on improving online resources and interactivity. One student suggested, *"Increased offline resources like providing downloadable content and offline access to course materials can help students with limited internet connectivity to continue our studies without interruption."* Another proposed to *"Incorporate elements such as quizzes, polls, simulations, and branching scenarios to make the learning experience more engaging and immersive."*

Technical support and infrastructure were also key concerns. A student emphasized, *"To optimize the blended learning experience, enhanced technical support is essential."* Some requested specific tools, with one suggesting *"using Google Spreadsheet in conducting class and submission of required papers."* Others focused on content, requesting to *"Invite practitioners/known personality in the specific field for a certain topic for discussion."* Flexibility was important, with one student asking for *"More on online and module pls. So that those who can't come to the F2F class lecture can still catch up."* Notably, many responses simply stated *"None"* or *"N/A,"* indicating satisfaction with the current setup or no additional suggestions.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study's findings led researchers to draw the following conclusions:

1. Blended learning is highly effective at the University of Sto. Tomas Legazpi Graduate School, and students perceive it positively across various aspects. Graduate students particularly value the flexibility this approach offers, indicating that blended learning successfully meets their diverse needs.
2. The flexibility offered by this approach is particularly valued, indicating that blended learning successfully meets the diverse needs of graduate students.
3. While blended learning is generally well-received, there are significant challenges, primarily related to technical infrastructure and internet connectivity. These issues can potentially disrupt the learning process and affect the overall effectiveness of blended learning implementation.
4. Student engagement in the online components of blended learning remains an area for improvement, suggesting a need for more interactive and engaging online learning experiences. Academic integrity in online assessments is a concern for a significant portion of students, highlighting the need for robust systems and policies to ensure fair evaluation in the blended learning environment. The success of blended learning relies heavily on the digital competence of faculty members, indicating a need for ongoing professional development in this area.

## Recommendations

1. Enhance technical infrastructure and internet connectivity to address the most prevalent challenges faced by students. Invest in reliable internet services, provide robust technical support, and develop contingency plans for technical disruptions.
2. Implement comprehensive faculty training programs focused on digital literacy, online teaching skills, and creating engaging online content. This will improve the quality of instruction and student engagement in the blended learning environment. Faculty training also serves as a protective measure, ensuring that instructors can effectively support students, thereby fostering a resilient learning environment.
3. Develop and implement robust policies and systems to maintain academic integrity in online assessments. This should include using advanced plagiarism detection tools and designing assessments that are less susceptible to cheating.
4. Increase student engagement in online activities by incorporating more interactive elements such as quizzes, polls, simulations, and collaborative projects. Focus on creating a dynamic online learning environment that complements face-to-face sessions.
5. Improve scheduling and course delivery flexibility, particularly for working students. This could involve offering more asynchronous learning options and carefully balancing online and face-to-face components. This flexibility helps students, particularly working professionals, manage their time better and reduce stress, contributing to their overall psychological well-being and academic success. This resilience-building strategy helps students maintain balance in their personal and academic lives.
6. Establish a regular feedback system to continuously gather student perspectives on their blended learning experiences. Use this feedback to iteratively improve the blended learning approach and address emerging challenges.
7. Consider developing guidelines or best practices for blended learning at the institutional level, drawing on the successful aspects identified in this study and addressing the challenges noted by students.
8. Develop strategies to maintain and enhance the social aspects of learning in the blended environment. Encouraging peer interaction and building a sense of community, even in online settings, provides students with vital social support, a key protective factor that enhances both academic and psychological health.
9. Institutions looking to implement blended learning successfully should focus on investing reliable technological infrastructure, enhancing faculty and student training, and creating flexible learning models that cater to diverse students needs. The findings of this study suggest that fostering a supportive learning culture with a strong focus on student engagement, academic integrity, and social interaction will be crucial for the successful integration of blended learning. These

recommendations offer a framework for other institutions to create effective and inclusive blended learning environments, drawing from the strengths and challenges identified in this research.

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# Values of Filipino Seafarers: The Formula to a Successful Career

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## ABSTRACT

The decreasing deployment of Filipino officers to the international shipping companies has caused alarms to the Maritime Higher Educational Institutions and MARINA. This study will investigate the values of the Filipino officers employed by the international shipping companies. The result may be useful to the Philippine government in formulating curriculum for the MHEIs. This study was conceptualized to ascertain what are the values that are inherent among Filipino officers employed by international shipping companies. The SIRC 2002 survey showed Filipino seafarers occupy the No. 1 spot in global deployment. However, the recent study by the Baltic International Maritime Council (BIMCO/ICS) 2021 showed that deployment of Filipino officers has slowed down. The respondents of this study chosen using the simple random sampling method were the 94 Filipino Management and Operational level officers who were employed by international shipping companies. Hard copies of the questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the Philippines while soft copies were sent to Filipino officers on board. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation. Significant differences among variables were determined through One-way ANOVA and *t*-test of Independent Samples. Results showed that the values of *integrity*, *godliness*, and *loyalty* were predominantly high among the respondents while *discipline* was low. The study showed that discipline was low among senior officers, while it was found to be high among junior officers. Further research should be done to validate the result of this study and the impact of the intervention program.

**Keywords:** Values, Seafarers, Integrity, Godliness, Loyalty, Discipline

## Introduction

The Philippines ranked no. 1 in the deployment of seafarers to international shipping companies with 28.1% from the survey of Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC) 2002. The recent study conducted by the Baltic International Maritime Council (BIMCO) 2021 showed that Filipino senior officers and junior officers ranked second compared to officers from Indo-Pacific regions and China. The survey was conducted among international ship owners that employ officers of different nationalities. Indeed, it showed that there was a decrease in the deployment of Filipino officers in both management and operational level categories. Thus, this study was conceptualized with the help of Filipino management and operational-level officers employed by foreign shipowners. The study determined the values that are determinants of a successful career at sea. The study determined the percentage of Filipino officers employed by international shipping companies. Instruments were distributed to the randomly selected Filipino officers employed by international shipping companies.

The result of the study may serve as the formula for a successful seafaring career. The study will formulate an intervention program for a successful seafaring career among Filipino senior and junior officers and increase the deployment to international shipping companies.

## Background and Theoretical Framework of the Study

The global survey of Seafarers International Research Center (SIRC) 2002 showed 28.1% deployment with 9% as senior officers and 19% as junior officers while 72% were ratings. The Filipino seafarers garnered the top spot.

The Baltic International Maritime Consultative Organization (BIMCO) survey, in collaboration with the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) in 2021, predicted a shortfall of 26,240 Standard of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW)-certified officers to complement the increasing number of ships trading globally. Movements of goods around the world have increased due to the opening of borders, thereby easing the restrictions and worldwide trade has increased tremendously.

Given the improving worldwide economic conditions, the demand for ships of all types has increased, causing a shortfall of ship officers and ratings. However, the survey showed that the officer requirements of international shipping companies were recruited from other countries and the Philippines. According to the report (BIMCO/ICS, 2021), the global requirement for STCW-certified officers will last until 2026. In the same report by BIMCO/ICS (2021), China was at the top spot in the supply of Operational level officers for the global shipping market, and the Philippines ranked second. In the category of Management-level officers, Srinivasan (2021) stated that the top spot was garnered by senior officers from the Indo-Pacific region, while the Philippines was second in the global employment ranking.

The decrease in deployment was reported by the Manila Times that in 2018 there were 337,502 seafarers deployed, which was 111,961 lower compared with the figure of 449,463 in 2017 (Ayeng, 2019) as reported by Tang and Bhattacharya (2021). Even though a separate figure for officer deployment was not provided, it is reasonable to assume that tens and thousands of Filipino officers lost employment in 2018. If this continues, the Philippine maritime industry will be strained with an increasing number of unemployed MARINA-certified officers.

The report of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) shows a 25% reduction in deployment from 2018 to 2019 during the pre-pandemic era. The decrease in deployment of Filipino officers during the COVID-19 pandemic was 53% in 2020 and 48% in 2021 (POEA, 2021). This study was conceptualized because of the decrease in the deployment of Filipino officers to international shipping companies.

Every seafarer must have core values to succeed in his career at sea. The seafarer's core values are passion, respect, loyalty, responsibility, discipline, tolerance, humility, and generosity (Luna 2020). A seafarer must possess the important value of *loyalty*. The reputation and interests of the ship, the employers, and the maritime personnel must be safeguarded.

This study investigated the Filipino seafarers' values as the formula for a successful career at sea. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the Filipino officers' values as an entire group and when classified as to annual salary, rank, and course graduated?
2. Are there significant differences in the Filipino officers' values when classified according to annual salary, rank, and course graduated?
3. What intervention program can be developed to achieve a successful career at sea?

### ***Hypothesis***

There are no significant differences in the Filipino officers' values when classified according to annual salary, rank, and course graduated.

### ***Related Literature***

The Spanish Pacific empire was established in the sixteenth century, Filipinos primarily crewed the ships that connected Mexico to Manila (Zhao & Amante, 2005). While the maritime industry has relied on transnational labor for centuries and has been globalized for more than 600 years, it has long been known for its severe racial and ethnic labor divisions (Sharma, 2022).

Ships on international voyages have become more prominent and carry more cargo with less operating cost. Compared to older ships built in the 90s, new ships require less complement to operate. Despite the mild



shortage of officers, ships must run with insufficient backup or fewer officers than the recommended level of manning (Petersen, 2000 as cited by Sugimoto, 2004).

From the Seafarers Manpower report of BIMCO/ICS 2021, the demand for officers has increased by 24%. The report indicates that 26,240 STCW-certified officers are required globally for the next decade. Fan et al. (2017) stated that one of the most essential criteria for sailors to be hired aboard foreign ships are their ability to communicate in English.

The analysis of Kartal et. al (2019) from their study showed the strengths and weaknesses of alternative countries, concluding that the most suitable nation was Filipino, based on all identified assessment criteria. It appears that basis on economic and cultural factors, the Filipino OOWs are the choice of international ship owners. Shipping companies from south Korea base their recruitment on the education, training and experience of the OOWs they employ (Kartal et. al 2019).

### ***Training and Education***

According to Kim and Kim (2015) in Edirisinghe, (2018), intrinsic motivational elements related to self-actualization are the most effective academic motivators, demonstrating the importance of quick pleasure in the learning process. For the sake of maritime safety and to raise the level of knowledge and expertise among seafarers, education and training are crucial. The MHEIs play a crucial role in the development of knowledge, understanding, and performance of the students, and training enhances the skills of the seafarers aligned with the latest issues in the maritime industry.

Motivation for education can be confused with a desire to have a career, wealth, or the approval of superiors in the form of excellent grades (Edirisinghe, 2018). The motivated individual can hurdle any obstacle that may hinder his ambition or dream of a life at sea. MHEIs should enhance the facilities and equipment, curricular programs, learning methodologies, and quality of instruction toward producing a pool of highly qualified deck officers and marine engineers.

### ***Seafarers' Values***

Values are the fundamental beliefs, behaviors and attitudes that have been approved and accepted as what is good by society for a long time (Gamage KAA, 2021). In this study the seven core values identified by the researcher were integrity, perseverance, loyalty, excellence, discipline, godliness and equality. Luna (2020) identified the seafarers' eight core values are passion, respect, loyalty, responsibility, discipline, tolerance, humility, and generosity. Possessing values should make seafarers competitive and employable in the global shipping market. Every seafarer must have core values to succeed in a seafaring career. The result of the study showed that *loyalty* and *discipline* were significant among the seven values identified by the researcher, while Luna (2020) ranked these two values in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> places respectively. The reputation and interests of the ship, the employers, and the maritime personnel must be safeguarded. They should have complete trust in and loyalty to one another (Luna, 2020).

Loyalty is a sense of belonging manifested in the desire to remain in the organization (Suprayitno, 2019). The study of Silvervag, Haake, and Gulz (2018) defined and measured perseverance as choosing to continue working on a task after having failed at solving it. Luna (2020) postulated that discipline also entails being able to keep oneself together even in the most trying of circumstances. When put under strain, the well-disciplined person does not crumble and lose control. He remains focused and perseveres until he achieves success. Discipline is having control over one's life and keeping it in order.

## ***Conceptual and Theoretical Framework***

The illustration in Figure 1 shows the factors such as annual salary, rank on board ships and course graduated.

### **Method**

This descriptive study was designed to closely investigate Filipino officers' values employed by international shipping companies and formulate an intervention program for a successful career at sea and enhance their global employment. The simple random sampling method was used to gather the data. Hard copies of the questionnaires were given face-to-face to the respondents at the offices of Shipping companies A and B, training centers A and B, and to those Filipino officers who were on board, copies of the questionnaire in Google form with the link was sent. For inferential analysis, the One-way ANOVA and *t*-test for Independent Samples were employed to determine the significance of the differences in terms of the independent variables.

### ***Respondents of the Study***

The respondents of this research as shown in Table 1 were the ninety-four (94) Filipino officers (Management and Operational levels) employed by international shipping companies. The respondents were currently employed by shipping companies A and B. Also, Filipino officers who were on upgrading training at training centers A and B were included as respondents.

### ***Research Paradigm***

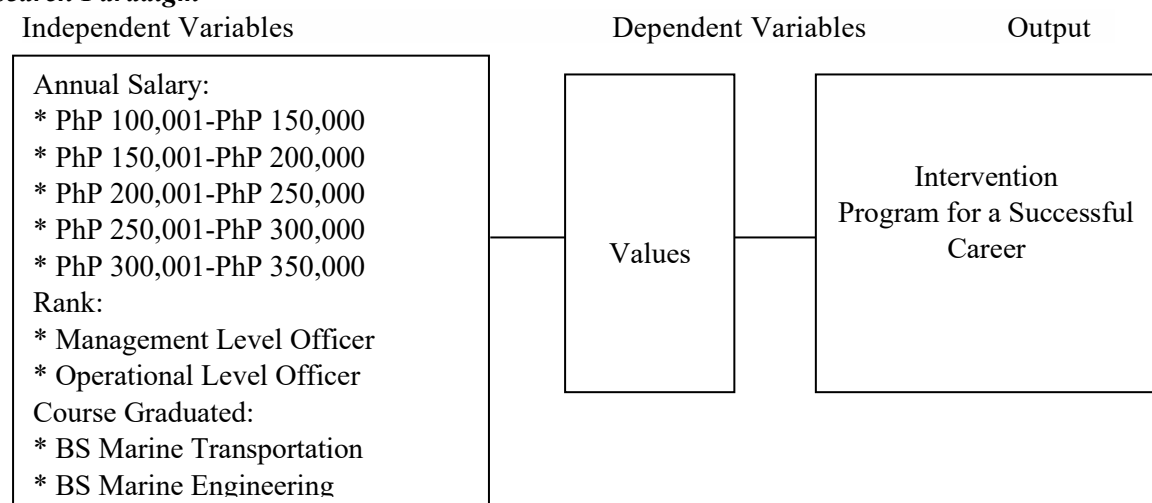


Figure 1. The diagram shows the values as influenced by annual salary, rank, and course graduated.

The distribution of the 94 respondents in Table 1 revealed that 23% (22) received an annual salary of PhP 100,001–PhP 150,000, 16% (15) received an annual salary of PhP 150,001–PhP 200,000, 14% (13) received an annual salary of PhP 200,001–PhP 250,000, 11% (10) received an annual salary of PhP 250,001–PhP 300,000, and 36% (34) received an annual salary of PhP 300,001–PhP 350,000. There were 50% (47) of each of the management and operational level officers; 48% (45) were graduates of BS Marine Transportation while 53% (49) were graduates of BS Marine Engineering.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Entire Group	94	100
(A) Annual Salary		
PhP 100,000 to PhP 150,000	22	23
PhP 150,001 to PhP 200,000	15	16
PhP 200,001 to PhP 250,000	13	14
PhP 250,001 to PhP 300,000	10	11
PhP 300,001 to PhP 350,000	34	36
Total	94	100
(B) Rank		
Management Level Officer	47	50
Operational Level Officer	47	50
Total	94	100
(C) Course		
BS Marine Transportation	45	48
BS Marine Engineering	49	52
Total	94	100

## Results

### *Descriptive Data Analysis*

This portion of the data presentation shows the descriptive data on the Filipino officers' values when classified according to annual salary, rank, and course graduated. The Filipino officers' values were analyzed as an entire group. The values of *integrity* got the highest mean of 4.45 while the values of *discipline* got the lowest mean of 4.23. Table 2 shows the data.

Table 2: Filipino Officers Values as an Entire Group

	Mean	Description	SD	Rank
Integrity	4.45	Very often true of me	0.54	1
Godliness	4.38	Very often true of me	0.60	2
Loyalty	4.36	Very often true of me	0.63	3
Equality	4.30	Very often true of me	0.58	4
Perseverance	4.29	Very often true of me	0.58	5
Excellence	4.26	Very often true of me	0.58	6
Discipline	4.23	Very often true of me	0.56	7
Overall	4.30	Very often true of me	0.57	

The Filipino officers' values were analyzed and grouped according to annual salary. The Filipino officers' values of *godliness* got the highest mean of 4.80 among the officers with an annual salary of PhP 250,001-PhP 300,000, while the values of *loyalty* got the lowest mean of 4.00 among the officers with an annual salary of PhP 200,001-PhP 250,000. Table 3 shows the data.

Table 3: Filipino Officers' Values When Classified According to Annual Salary

	100,000 to 150,000			150,001 to 200,000			200,001 to 250,000			250,001 to 300,000			300,001 to 350,000			Total		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
VALUES																		
Godliness	22	4.25	0.46	15	4.57	0.47	12	4.30	0.57	10	4.80	0.25	34	4.31	0.74	93	4.39	0.60
Integrity	22	4.44	0.44	15	4.60	0.42	12	4.35	0.46	10	4.73	0.33	34	4.35	0.70	93	4.45	0.55
Equality	22	4.45	0.45	15	4.45	0.42	12	4.06	0.48	10	4.62	0.48	34	4.15	0.70	93	4.31	0.58
Loyalty	22	4.62	0.38	15	4.34	0.43	12	4.00	0.57	10	4.57	0.70	34	4.26	0.76	93	4.36	0.63
Perseverance	22	4.29	0.51	15	4.44	0.52	12	4.02	0.45	10	4.56	0.39	34	4.27	0.71	93	4.30	0.58
Excellence	22	4.34	0.49	15	4.29	0.49	12	4.21	0.48	10	4.52	0.36	34	4.15	0.73	93	4.26	0.58
Discipline	22	4.17	0.51	15	4.43	0.52	12	4.18	0.38	10	4.32	0.43	34	4.18	0.68	93	4.23	0.56

The Filipino officers' values were analyzed and classified according to rank. The Filipino officers' values of *integrity* had the highest mean of 4.49 among operational-level officers, while the values of *discipline* had the lowest mean of 4.20 among management-level officers. Table 4 shows the data.

Table 4: Filipino Officers' Values When Classified According to Rank

	Management			Operational			Total		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD
VALUES									
Integrity	47	4.41	0.64	47	4.49	0.42	94	4.46	0.55
Godliness	47	4.34	0.69	47	4.45	0.48	94	4.38	0.60
Equality	47	4.22	0.69	47	4.39	0.42	94	4.31	0.59
Loyalty	47	4.34	0.74	47	4.34	0.51	94	4.35	0.64
Perseverance	47	4.32	0.65	47	4.25	0.52	94	4.30	0.59
Excellence	47	4.21	0.65	47	4.31	0.50	94	4.27	0.58
Discipline	47	4.20	0.63	47	4.28	0.47	94	4.24	0.56

The Filipino officers' values were analyzed and classified according to course graduated. The values of *godliness* among BSMarE graduates got the highest mean of 4.47, while the values of *discipline* among the BSMT graduates got the lowest mean of 4.18. Table 5 shows the data.

Table 5: Filipino Officers' Values When Classified According to Course Graduated

	BS Marine Transportation			BS Marine Engineering			Total		
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD
Godliness	45	4.30	0.50	49	4.47	0.66	94	4.38	0.60
Integrity	45	4.44	0.42	49	4.44	0.63	94	4.45	0.54
Loyalty	45	4.37	0.54	49	4.33	0.70	94	4.36	0.63
Perseverance	45	4.28	0.51	49	4.30	0.64	94	4.29	0.58
Excellence	45	4.26	0.48	49	4.26	0.67	94	4.26	0.58
Equality	45	4.26	0.50	49	4.32	0.64	94	4.30	0.58
Discipline	45	4.18	0.48	49	4.29	0.62	94	4.23	0.55

## Inferential Data Analysis

This portion of the data presentation indicates the inferential data on the Filipino officers' annual salary, rank onboard, and course graduated. Statistical tools employed were One-way ANOVA and *t*-test for Independent Samples to determine the significance of the differences in values in terms of annual salary, rank on board, and course graduated. The Filipino seafarers' values were analyzed with One-way ANOVA and classified according to annual salary. The result showed that *loyalty* was significant,  $F(4,88)=2.571$ ,  $p=.043$ . However, the results of the Scheffe test revealed that not one of the pairs for salary came out significant because the *p* value for loyalty in terms of annual salary was .043. *Equality* was found significant  $F(4,88)=2.608$ ,  $p=.041$  when analyzed in terms of values and classified according to annual salary. However, the results of the Scheffe test revealed that not one of the pairs for salary came out significant because the *p* value for equality in terms of salary was .041. Table 6 shows the data.

Table 6: One-way ANOVA Results on Values When Classified According to Annual Salary

Note: \*significance level set at .05

The Filipino officers' values in terms of the two ranks when analyzed with *t*-test for Independent Samples were not significant. Regardless of the rank on board, the values of Filipino officers are similar. Table 7 shows the data.

Table 7: *t*-test for Independent Samples Results between Management Level and Operational Level in Values

		Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Integrity	Between Groups	1.608	4	.402	1.374	.250
	Within Groups	25.755	88	.293		
	Total	27.363	92			
Perseverance	Between Groups	1.900	4	.475	1.425	.232
	Within Groups	29.327	88	.333		
	Total	31.227	92			
Loyalty	Between Groups	3.841	4	.960	2.571	.043
	Within Groups	32.877	88	.374		
	Total	36.718	92			
Excellence	Between Groups	1.258	4	.315	.925	.453
	Within Groups	29.917	88	.340		
	Total	31.175	92			
Discipline	Between Groups	.892	4	.223	.708	.589
	Within Groups	27.726	88	.315		
	Total	28.619	92			
Godliness	Between Groups	2.971	4	.743	2.171	.079
	Within Groups	30.112	88	.342		
	Total	33.083	92			
Equality	Between Groups	3.285	4	.821	2.608	.041
	Within Groups	27.719	88	.315		
	Total	31.005	92			

Note: \*significance level set at .05

	Rank	N	Mean	T	Df	Sig.
Integrity	Management	47	4.41	-.639	92	.524
	Operational	47	4.48			
Perseverance	Management	47	4.32	.428	92	.670
	Operational	47	4.27			
Loyalty	Management	47	4.34	-.210	92	.834
	Operational	47	4.37			
Excellence	Management	47	4.21	-.748	92	.436
	Operational	47	4.31			
Discipline	Management	47	4.20	-.617	92	.539
	Operational	47	4.27			
Godliness	Management	47	4.34	-.772	92	.442
	Operational	47	4.43			
Equality	Management	47	4.22	-1.398	92	.165
	Operational	47	4.39			

Note:\*significance level set at .05

The Filipino officers' values were analyzed with *t*-test for Independent Samples and classified according to course graduated was not significant. Regardless of the course graduated, the values of Filipino officers are similar. Table 8 shows the data.

Table 8: *t*-test for Independent Samples Results between BSMT and BSMarE in Values

	Course	N	Mean	T	df	Sig.
Integrity	BSMT	45	4.45	.032	92	.975
	BSMarE	49	4.44			
Perseverance	BSMT	45	4.29	-.121	92	.904
	BSMarE	49	4.30			
Loyalty	BSMT	45	4.39	.490	92	.625
	BSMarE	49	4.33			
Excellence	BSMT	45	4.26	.021	92	.983
	BSMarE	49	4.26			
Discipline	BSMT	45	4.17	-1.069	92	.288
	BSMarE	49	4.29			
Godliness	BSMT	45	4.30	-1.388	92	.168
	BSMarE	49	4.47			
Equality	BSMT	45	4.28	-.317	92	.752
	BSMarE	49	4.32			

Note:\*significance level set at .05

## Discussion and Conclusion

Descriptive analysis of the data as an entire group showed that *integrity* (mean 4.45) was high while *discipline* (mean 4.23) was low. The result showed that the entirety of the Filipino officers employed by international shipping companies possess the value of *integrity*. When analyzed in terms of the annual salary they received, the value of *godliness* (mean 4.80) was high among those receiving higher salaries as compared to those receiving lower salaries, in which *loyalty* (mean 4.0) was found low. The analysis in terms of values classified according to annual salary showed that those receiving higher salaries possess the value of *godliness* while those receiving lower salaries possess the value of *loyalty*. The study showed that Filipino officers are loyal to their employers despite receiving low salaries. The analysis in terms of values and classified according to rank showed that the value of *integrity* (mean 4.49) was high among operational level officers and the value of *discipline* (mean 4.20) was low among management level officers. The analysis in terms of values and classified according to course graduated showed that the value

of *godliness* was high among graduates of BS Marine Engineering while the value of *discipline* was low among BS Marine Transportation graduates. One-way ANOVA analysis of values in terms of annual salary revealed that *loyalty*  $F(4,88)=2.571, p=.043$  and *equality*  $F(4,88)=2.608, p=.041$  were significant. However, the Scheffé test results showed that none of the pairs for salary came out significant. The *t*-test for Independent Samples of values in terms of the two ranks was not significant. Therefore, the values of Filipino officers are similar regardless the rank on board ship. The *t*-test for Independent Samples of values in terms of the course graduated was not significant. Regardless of course graduated the values of Filipino seafarers are similar. From the result of the study, it can be concluded that Filipino officers possess the values of integrity, perseverance, loyalty, excellence, discipline, godliness and equality, which make them the preferred officers to complement the ships of international shipping companies.

## Recommendation

As an offshoot of this study, an Intervention Program towards a successful career at sea was formulated. This may enhance the employability of Filipino officers toward deployment to international shipping companies. Results showed that the values of integrity, godliness, and loyalty was predominant among the respondents. Discipline was found to have the lowest mean among the respondents. The study showed that discipline was low among seafarers of the management level category, while it was found to be high among operational level officers. Maritime Higher Educational Institutions should design the curricular programs that would enhance the values of the students in the maritime courses. Shipping companies ought to design seminars to enhance the integrity, godliness, and loyalty of Filipino officers who aim to work for international shipping companies. Some courses designed by CHED MARINA were not aligned with the requirement as stipulated in the STCW 1978 as amended. The CHED/MARINA curriculum should include courses that are crucial to the growth of students' character and values. In either case, the Philippines' shipping companies may conduct seminars for the cadets/officers.

## Program Component

Component	Objective	Strategies	Person Responsible	Expected Output
Integrity	Enhance honesty and righteousness of the seafarer	Conduct seminars or workshops	MHEIs - Dean / HR Head Shipping companies - HR Manager	Submit outputs at the end of the seminar/workshop.
Godliness	Strengthen faith in God and ask for guidance in critical situations	Conduct seminars on different faiths.	MHEIs - Dean / HR Manager Shipping companies - HR Manager	Must pass the assessment to complete the seminar.
Loyalty	Strengthen the value of Loyalty	Conduct seminar/Workshop	MHEIs - Dean / HR Manager Shipping companies - HR Manager	Submit an output at the end of the seminar/workshop

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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# Program Accreditation in the University of Santo Tomas – Legazpi: An Exploration of Practices towards Sustainable Quality Assurance for Education

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## ABSTRACT

Private education, with tuition serving as its lifeblood, is constantly challenged to provide quality teaching and advanced learning resources to students, especially in the face of a dynamic education landscape. Private schools like the University of Santo Tomas-Legazpi emphasize efforts and innovations in quality management, including program accreditation. UST–Legazpi, throughout its 76 years, has established itself as the premier Dominican University of Bicol, committed to excellence as it envisions to be an autonomous university and a center of innovation, academic excellence, and transformative education in the region. With a quality management system certified to the ISO 9001:2015, working towards an integrated management system that is also certified to the ISO 21001:2018, the university holds accredited status in various programs, from the Basic Education to Graduate School levels. In context with the *3P Conceptual Model of Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education*, a conceptual model of IQA for teaching and learning centered around the 3Ps (purpose, people, and process), promoting a contextual and integral approach towards understanding the working or non-working of institutional systems of quality assurance, this *descriptive qualitative research* aimed to forward an understanding of how UST-Legazpi operationalizes educational quality in line with quality assurance strategies such as program accreditation. Data were gathered via focus group discussions with the university’s academic representatives and review of relevant documentation. The findings indicate clear visioning and goal setting, leadership and management support, and established internal quality assurance system as among the notable practices, whereas stakeholder engagement is an area for improvement.

**Keywords:** Education, Quality management, Accreditation, Best practices, Sustainability

## Introduction

### *Challenges in Education, Quality Assurance and Program Accreditation*

Private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) continue to confront challenges in today’s highly competitive and evolving educational landscape. Issues including the effectiveness and competitiveness of the curriculum program (Tabucanon et al., 2021), organizational leadership capability (Yang et al., 2023), inclusivity of teaching and learning (Altes et al., 2024), and internationalization (Moshtari and Safarpour, 2023) are among the challenges of HEIs to sustainable organizational performance. All the while, amidst the rise of public local universities and colleges (LUCs) that offer students the same courses and curriculum for lower fees (Yang et al., 2023), private HEIs are forced to innovate to maintain competitive advantage. Private HEIs wanting to differentiate themselves from competitors and ensure sustainability (Govender et al., 2014) must demonstrate the ability to provide quality education and support services, i.e. providing up-to-date facilities and adopting strategic approaches to quality, including accreditation to established standards (Hashim et al., 2021).

Program accreditation is a form of external quality assurance (Augustine et al., 2021) for teaching and learning (Ta et al., 2023). It is an academic-based accrediting system that places emphasis on the curriculum of the academic program being accredited, while also analyzing the institutional and administrative operations in support of the academic program, such as student services, alumni, library and laboratory facilities, registrar and admission system, financial operation and organizational structure (Arcelo, 2003).

Research has been identified as a task that allows HEIs to stay on track of providing quality education (Elken and Stensaker, 2022), hence this exploration of program accreditation as practiced in University of Santo Tomas – Legazpi, the *premier Dominican university of Bicol* in the Philippines.

### ***The 3P Conceptual Model of Internal Quality Assurance***

The *3P (purpose, people, process) Conceptual Model of Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education* is a model developed by Krooi et al. (2024) that promotes a contextual and integral approach towards understanding the working and non-working of institutional systems of quality assurance. It proposes that *internal quality assurance for teaching and learning mobilizes relevant actors for the purpose of improvement, professional development, and accountability by means of systematic processes*. The working of IQA in the context of this proposition was used to: (1) explore program accreditation as a quality assurance for teaching and learning in UST-Legazpi, specifically (a) the purpose of program accreditation; (b) the people involved in accreditation; and (c) the specific processes carried out in relation to program accreditation; and (2) determine best practices and opportunities for improvement.

### **Methodology**

This qualitative study is descriptive by design, exploring the opinions, perspectives, and attitudes (Nassaji et al., 2015) of the representatives of the UST-Legazpi academic community as participants. Data were gathered via the conduct of focus group discussions (FGD) (Corner et al., 2019) with two groups: (1) five academic leaders, Deans/Principals, of the academic programs that undertake program accreditation; and (2) seven faculty. Participants were purposively selected based on their involvement in program accreditation related activities. An FGD Guide was used to articulate the rules and regulations of the discussion (Gundumogula, 2020) and a questionnaire following the research objectives and anchored on the 3P Conceptual Model of IQA in HEIs was used as data gathering instrument. The following are the key questions: (1) *Why do you subject your program to accreditation?*; (2) *Who are involved in the program accreditation? What are their specific roles/tasks/inputs?*; and 3) *What specific activities are carried out in relation to program accreditation?*

University protocols were followed in the involvement of participants, including permission to conduct the study and gather data as well as involve employees as participants in keeping with ethical considerations (ONyumba et al., 2018). Participants' consent was sought via a signed Consent Form and the confidentiality and anonymity of responses were reiterated to the participants.

Data were analyzed through thematic analysis – a process that involves transcribing interviews, coding the data into smaller analyzable units, and categorizing codes into themes which helps in building theoretical concepts from qualitative evidence (Khokhar et al., 2020). When focused on interviews or focus groups, thematic analysis presumes that the participant's recollections have value that merits exploration, synthesis and intensive description (Lochmiller, 2021). The development of themes was not strict to the research questions, rather focused on concepts discernible from the responses to more effectively present the experience/practice being described. Existing documentation in the university, e.g. reports, evaluation data, etc. served as secondary data.

## Results

### ***UST-Legazpi's Purpose for Program Accreditation: Excellence and Sustainability through an Internal Culture of Quality***

Oriented by the university's *organizational context and strategic direction* and by the *concept of program accreditation as an assessment or evaluation by an external party to verify the programs' ability to meet standards of quality*, two general themes that articulate the purpose of program accreditation emerged from the results of the focus group discussion: (1) *program accreditation is a quality assurance mechanism used to attain the university's strategic goals*; and (2) *program accreditation results in desirable outcomes*.

(1) Subjecting the programs to accreditation is an *indicator of the university's commitment to excellence* in the provision or delivery of quality education and support services – a commitment that emanates from the university's clearly expressed vision, mission, and objectives (VMO). With an accredited status, validated by an authorized and credible accrediting agency, taken to mean compliance with standards – in terms of curriculum, faculty, and resources among others – *program accreditation is undertaken to guarantee the students, parents, and other stakeholders of the quality of education and support services delivered by the university*; demonstrating focus on the needs of students, interests of parents, and professional development of the faculty, thus the academic program's alignment with the university's VMO.

Program accreditation enables *people* in the university to be conscious of standards for quality processes, services, and outputs; *prompting a form of internal quality assurance* that is in keeping with the university vision (i.e. an autonomous university), mission (i.e. the pursuit of excellence in academics and health services through dedicated study), and objectives (i.e. to develop the course programs for strategic partnerships and transformative education; to achieve excellent academic performance specifically in licensure exams; to work for the local and international accreditation of academic programs; to respond to the changing local and global opportunities and challenges) and *that complements other quality assurance initiatives in the university*, such as the implementation of management processes and systems and the certification to ISO standards.

As an internal assessment, program accreditation enables *self-regulation and self-evaluation*; the identification of one's strengths and weaknesses in view of the established requirements and standards and the *university's self-concept*. As an external assessment, program accreditation is a means of *validating the program's claims to quality* to sustain effective practices and *recommend actions for continual improvement*. Generally, as quality assurance, *program accreditation is a means of assessment – whether internal or external – geared towards improvement*, including the improvement of teaching strategies of the Faculty, the growth of employees, and the improvement of processes and services; *assuring interested parties of the university's continuous efforts to maintain quality and address weaknesses and challenges*, including performance in licensure examination and retention of qualified and competent faculty.

(2) Program accreditation is also perceived to result in *desirable outcomes*. Accreditation *builds program and school reputation* as it gives *formal recognition* to the program and the university by attesting that the program maintains excellent standards in its educational operations, in the context of its aims and objectives. The *recognition and elevated status* gives a boost of confidence to implementers of the program – school officials, faculty, and staff – and prompts *innovation and differentiation* to maintain and advance the program's accredited status. An accredited program contributes to the *employability* of graduates locally and internationally. All these said, the accreditation of a program is a consideration of students and parents for *enrollment*.

## ***People Involved in Program Accreditation in UST-Legazpi***

The thematic analysis revealed the involvement of *people* categorized into the following groups: (1) the Management; (2) the Program under survey; (3) the Support units, or those delivering services in support of academic programs; and (4) other stakeholders.

(1) Management. *School administrators* enact policies as well as plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate programs, projects, and activities. They are positioned as *agents* of the encompassing process of *governance and management*, enforcing an organizational structure that executes the crafting of plans, the design of programs, projects, and activities, the determination and allocation of necessary resources, and the monitoring of programs, projects, and activities for improvement. During external assessment, the university's top officials, including the Rector and President and the Vice-President for Academic Affairs are seen as key figures involved in the assessment process; whose participation in courtesy meetings and interviews emphasize program accreditation as an institutional concern.

(2) Program under survey. The *key actors*, or those with the “*main role*” in program accreditation, are the people implementing the academic program. These include the *Principal* (for Basic Education) and the *Dean* (for tertiary education and professional education), the *Program Chair* or coordinator, the *Faculty*, and the *Management Staff* of the department or College unit.

The *Principal or Dean* is seen as the *leader* of the program accreditation process, ensuring the alignment of the program with standards and overseeing the technical process of preparation for the assessment or what is commonly known as the survey or the visit.

The *Program Chair's* role in the technical process of preparation, which includes accomplishing the assessment tool or survey instrument and gathering documentary evidence, is highlighted in the participants' responses. The Program Chair facilitates “*most of the tasks*” relevant to accreditation, emphasizing the concept of accreditation as the process of external assessment more than intrinsic quality assurance.

The *Faculty* are the *primary agents* of the *trifocal role* of the university – instruction (design of instructional program and material, delivery of instruction, and assessment of learning), research, and extension or community involvement. This highlights the *crucial role of the Faculty in the quality assurance system as they dispense outputs in the key result areas of accreditation; hence the need to maintain a high level of competence among the Faculty and to provide them with opportunities for professional development*. The role of the Faculty in the technical preparations, likewise emerged from the data, again highlighting a set of technical activities with respect to the assessment or the visit.

The *Management Staff* mainly assists the College unit with *technical requirements* of the visit, specifically documentation and logistics.

The Program under survey communicates and coordinates with Supporting units for the delivery of necessary processes and services and the *collection of information relevant to the assessment of the program*.

(3) Support units. Support units are *functional areas or departments that deliver processes and services in support of the academic program*. With respect to the visit, the Support units assume the “*minor or support role*” of providing necessary information and documentation as well as participation in verificatory interviews.

Among the Support units in the university, the results of the FGD highlight the *technical assistance and support* provided by the *Office of Planning and Development* – specifically its involvement in coordinating

the documentation and logistics of all units involved as well as assisting the Program under survey to meet the requirements of the assessment, in context with the institutional system.

(4) Other stakeholders. *Students, parents, alumni, external agencies or organizations*, and the *community* also play a role in program accreditation. The *feedback* of these stakeholders, gathered through evaluation activities and their participation in verification interviews during the visit, serve as inputs that inform improvement.

### ***The Program Accreditation Process in UST-Legazpi***

In context with the 3P Conceptual Model for IQA, which has established that *process* is that which includes the mechanisms and instruments needed for achieving the purpose of internal quality assurance (Krooi et al., 2024), the *program accreditation process* refers to the set of specific activities carried out in relation to or for the purpose of program accreditation. The thematic analysis revealed two main themes as to the *program accreditation process* in UST-Legazpi: (1) *established processes of the UST-Legazpi quality management system*; and (2) *subjecting the program to the accreditation visit (external assessment)*.

(1) *Established processes of the UST-Legazpi quality management system*. The following activities were specified by the participants as relevant to program accreditation: (a) *program planning, management and monitoring*, which includes (a.i) ensuring that the program complies with minimum regulatory requirements (i.e. adequacy and competence of faculty) and with school policies (e.g. provisions on work load); (a.ii) identifying non-standard practices; (a.iii) identifying necessary actions for implementation, including actions in key result areas (i.e. instruction, research, community extension); and (a.iv) monitoring of actions; (b) *instructional delivery, mentoring, and supervision*, which includes (b.i) preparation of instructional materials, including mentoring of Faculty on the preparation of these materials; and (b.ii) conduct of class observation; and (c) *documentation and recordkeeping*, which generally refers to consciously retaining documents in key result areas that are likewise evaluated in external assessments (accreditation visits and yearly audit of the university's QMS), including curricular materials namely learning plans, curriculum maps, syllabi, assessment materials like examination instruments with a Table of Specification, and student outputs like research work and portfolios. These activities are part of already established processes in the university, with the prospect of program accreditation, specifically the external assessment, providing guidelines or direction for the implementation of these activities.

In general, the responses shared by the participants indicate that the program accreditation process corresponds to the established processes of the university's quality management system (QMS) – a QMS that adopts the common IQA mechanism of plan-do-check-and-act (PDCA) and is certified to the ISO 9001:2015. Both the Faculty and the Academic Heads group expressed the notion that program accreditation process encompasses the interrelated processes of people carrying out their respective responsibilities in context with the roles and functions defined by the organizational structure, suggesting the idea that each unit and each Faculty or Personnel carrying out their work consciously is a step of quality assurance, i.e. program accreditation. This implies a concept of program accreditation as embedded in the institutional system and reinforcing it as internal quality assurance; a concept that, while the participants affirm, remains an ideal and an aspiration as the experience of program accreditation in view of external assessment (second theme) highlights gaps in practice.

The second theme elaborates the program accreditation process, particularly in view of the external assessment.

(2) *Subjecting the program to the accreditation visit (external assessment)*. A set of activities specifically implemented towards the external assessment, which will be referred to hereon as the accreditation visit, is emphasized in the FGD with both groups. The following activities were highlighted with respect to this theme: (a) *planning for the accreditation visit*, which includes (a.i) the conduct of orientation and unit

meetings initiated by the Program under survey and involving the university's quality assurance officer; (a.ii) the identification of tasks and roles anent to the accreditation visit, often constituting a "committee" that facilitates the specific tasks; (a.iii) drawing up a time-table for the accomplishment of tasks, often specifying a schedule for "accreditation work"; and (a.iv) communicating with Support units for needed documentation; (b) *self-assessment*, which refers to the self-survey or evaluation prompted by the "accomplishment" of the accreditation instrument (the tool that specifies the educational quality standards) and which includes (b.i) verifying compliance with minimum regulatory requirements; (b.ii) familiarization with the accreditation instrument; (b.iii) identifying necessary actions in view of identified gaps; and (b.iv) orienting the people on the claims made in the self-assessment; (c) *implementation of planned actions relevant to the accreditation visit*, which includes (c.i) implementation of previous accreditors' recommendations (in the case of revisits); and (c.ii) monitoring the accomplishment of specific tasks relevant to the accreditation visit; (d) *documentation*, which includes (d.i) preparing or collecting information or evidence about the quality standards; (d.ii) documenting these information in standard format and ensuring they meet the specific requirements of the visiting team; (e) the *accreditation visit*, which refers to the external assessment by accreditors and which includes (e.i) the presentation of documentation for review; (e.ii) the visit to facilities for inspection; and (e.iii) the participation of school leaders, faculty, staff, and stakeholders in interviews with the accreditors; and (f) the *post-accreditation visit*, which includes post-visit meetings and discussions with the aim of reflecting on the process for improvement.

It is discernible that the program accreditation process, with respect to theme 2, establishes a PDCA cycle of its own, with activities (a)-(d) taking place at the onset (within months) of the accreditation visit. The participants agree that these activities do not form part of the "regular" cycle of operations, referring to these activities as "other tasks", contrary to the notion of program accreditation as being embedded in the existing institutional system. In view of theme 1, this posits a question as to how, or whether or not in fact, the process of program accreditation corresponds to the already existing PDCA cycle of the institutional QMS and implies a compliance-to-quality-standards that is created by inspection, rather than integrated with planned operations; program accreditation as the *ends* rather than the *means*.

### ***Best Practices and Opportunities for Improvement***

The study found the following as best practices: *the establishment of a clear vision, mission, and objectives; management support; and the implementation of a quality management system, encompassing an institutional internal quality assurance system that complement program accreditation.*

Opportunities for improvement include: *the engagement of stakeholders beyond being feedback providers but as collaborators in the school's delivery of quality education and support services and the attainment of the school's VMO; ensuring a highly competent line-up of faculty; and more streamlined and standards-based processes.*

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Looking into the three Ps – purpose, people, and process – involved in program accreditation in UST-Legazpi, the study finds that program accreditation as internal quality assurance for teaching and learning in UST-Legazpi is an institutional undertaking that complements the internal context of the university. *It mobilizes people across the university's defined organizational structure – specifically the top management, the implementers of the program under survey, the people delivering educational support services, and stakeholders including students, parents, alumni, and external partners – for the purpose of reputation building and ensuring quality towards the attainment of the university's strategic goals by means of the established processes of the UST-Legazpi quality management system.*

The purpose for program accreditation in UST-Legazpi draws up a concept of program accreditation not merely as a desired outcome or status, but a means to realize the overall vision, mission, and objectives (vmo) of the university and ensure excellence and continual improvement. Program accreditation enables the conscious regard for educational quality standards as an important context to the university's quality assurance for teaching and learning, well recognizing the need to maintain highly competent faculty, up-to-date learning resources, and efficient services as a result of adhering to these quality standards.

The vmo-oriented purpose compels all relevant units – the academic unit implementing the program under survey, the units delivering educational support services – in the program accreditation process as a means to contribute to the institutional vmo. Hence, the program accreditation process is seen to encompass the interrelated roles and responsibilities of people in the university: the leadership and governance of school officials, the instruction-research-community involvement functions of faculty, the support services of support personnel, and the feedback of stakeholders including students, parents, alumni and partners.

The perceived purpose governs the processes and the delegation of people tasked to carry out these processes, affirming the interrelationship of the 3Ps in the IQA system, as asserted by Krooi et al. (2024). Following this perspective, the findings therefore highlight that while there is a concept and purpose for program accreditation as being embedded in the institutional system and reinforcing it as internal quality assurance, there is still an apparent disconnect between the perceived concept and purpose of program accreditation and the mobilization of processes, specifically when it comes to the process or set of specific activities with respect to the external assessment. The activities specific to the external assessment are predominantly and almost always immediately associated with the concept of program accreditation. The hyperfocus on these specific activities creates the perception of program accreditation as documentation and logistic preparation and implies quality standards not being well integrated into the existing documentation system. This then requires an entire process specific to the external assessment, therefore entailing roles and responsibilities that may be perceived as not within the established organizational structure and posing a challenge in effectively mobilizing people, as they may see these tasks/activities/processes as “added tasks” that are not within their assigned roles and responsibilities.

In conclusion, the purpose of undertaking accreditation is closely linked to how program accreditation is perceived as a concept, whether as an encompassing quality assurance system or that which is focused on external assessment. A purpose for program accreditation that emanates from an understanding of program accreditation as a concept and a process will ensure that roles and responsibilities are effectively delegated, ensuring accountability of all the people involved. This implies the need to establish a clear concept, definition and scope of program accreditation, as this governs the organization's purpose, the design of processes, and the designation of roles and responsibilities. Subsequently, educational institutions should assess their processes and overall culture to achieve lasting and sustainable effects.

The study hence reiterates the challenge for schools to develop multilayered/sophisticated QA and engage in dialogues and sharing of best practices, specifically as regards the integration of educational standards into the design of the internal QA system. It also calls for accrediting agencies to help bridge the gap between accreditation as an external assessment and as an efficient and innovative internal QA tool.

In view of the findings and conclusion forwarded by this exploratory study, the following are recommended:

The specific activities tuned to the requirements of the actual survey or visit including the technicality of documentation and the logistic demands, is worth further study to better articulate the challenges in this area.

The analysis may further be contextualized in view of the practices by programs with accredited status, the practices by category of people involved (whether as school official, faculty, support personnel, student,

parent, partner) thereby deepening the inquiry and analysis to draw out relationships between the 3Ps – i.e. how the purpose directs the process, how the process engages the people, which process/es do specific people prioritize over others, or how the people impact the process – articulating a dimensional and contextual understanding of program accreditation as internal quality assurance.

The study may further explore the people factor – people’s engagement to take on multiple roles across various processes, their attitudes and their level of commitment and cooperation – for an understanding and valuing of how people’s productivity levels and limitations impact processes, assuming that human resource may be a critical factor to quality assurance for education.

The inquiry may also be extended beyond the perspectives of faculty and academic leaders, into the perspectives of people in support units, articulating a holistic view of the university’s IQA.

Finally, this study hopes to initiate the university’s subsequent interest and efforts in research as well as dialogues or conversations that propound constructive reflection on the ways that quality assurance, including program accreditation, can be operationalized to more effectively implement effective and sustainable actions.

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# The Cross-Sectional Analysis of Happiness Among Thai Undergraduate Students

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## ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to investigate Thai undergraduates' happiness levels and to examine the differences between variables regarding the fundamental characteristics of undergraduate students and their happiness levels. An exploratory research design was adopted for the study. The research sample consisted of 314 students enrolled in a Bachelor of Education program at the Faculty of Education in Bangkok, Thailand. The undergraduate students were selected through a cluster random sampling technique and completed a happiness test. The test was a 4 - level rating scale comprising 15 questions. It had a validity range of 0.66 to 1.00 as rated by 3 experts, and a reliability coefficient of 0.72. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA. The findings showed that the undergraduate students had a high level of happiness (Mean = 41.56 S.D.= 4.16). Additionally, differences in gender, age, year of study, class attendance frequency, and frequency of activity participation were associated with statistically significant differences in happiness levels at the .05 level.

**Keywords:** Bachelor of Education Students, Happiness, Exploratory Research

## Introduction

Happiness in learning is an indicator of one's attitude toward education, learning satisfaction, and overall life experience. It can be said that happiness in learning is a driving force for acquiring knowledge, developing various skills, and creating a learning experience full of challenges and enjoyment, ultimately leading to the desired success. Additionally, happiness serves as a tool for educators to reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching methods and whether they meet the learning objectives.

However, the social context, access to education, and personal limitations directly impact learning happiness. This is particularly evident in higher education, where the content is more intensive and requires a deep understanding for practical application, which can easily lead to pressure. At the same time, many students carry the expectations of their families and peers, adding to the pressure. This pressure and the responsibilities associated with learning can easily lead to stress, diminishing happiness in learning and extending the time required to achieve academic success beyond the expected timeframe.

The Faculty of Education of Ramkhamhaeng University aims to produce graduates of high quality, both academically and professionally, who possess knowledge, morality, a good sense of professional responsibility, creativity, emotional stability, leadership, and skills that are beneficial for societal, community, and national development. The university offers a market of subjects' learning environment that promotes educational equity, resulting in the Faculty of Education having a diverse student population in terms of age and educational background. The Faculty of Education provides a variety of educational services, including both online and onsite lectures, learning-promoting activities, and other learning resources that help stimulate students to learn happily and achieve their desired success. Therefore, the research team is interested in studying the happiness of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education and examining the differences between basic characteristics and happiness levels to guide future improvements in the faculty's teaching and learning processes.

## **The Purpose of The Research**

1. Investigate Thai undergraduates' happiness levels.
2. Examine the differences between variables regarding undergraduate students' fundamental characteristics and happiness levels.

## **Literature Review**

### *Definition of happiness*

Happiness is a subjective experience that encompasses emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions. It is influenced by a variety of factors, including individual circumstances, relationships, and cultural context. Ultimately, happiness is often viewed as a key component of overall well-being and quality of life. According to the American Psychological Association (2018), happiness is defined as "an emotion characterized by joy, gladness, satisfaction, and overall well-being." Therefore, happiness often refers to a state of well-being characterized by positive emotions, life satisfaction, and a sense of fulfillment or meaning in life.

### *Happiness theory*

Positive Psychology Founded by Seligman (2011) the PERMA model provides a framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of happiness and well-being. The Model consists of 1) Positive Emotions This dimension emphasizes the importance of experiencing feelings such as joy, gratitude, and contentment. Positive emotions are crucial for fostering resilience and enhancing overall life satisfaction. 2) Engagement refers to the state of being deeply involved in activities that challenge and absorb individuals. This flow state is associated with enhanced creativity and productivity, contributing significantly to overall well-being. 3) Relationships The cultivation of supportive and meaningful relationships is a cornerstone of happiness. Strong social connections are consistently linked to higher levels of well-being, offering emotional support and fostering a sense of belonging. 4) Meaning Finding purpose in life often involves belonging to something greater than oneself. This sense of meaning can stem from various sources, including family, community, and personal values, and is vital for long-term satisfaction. 5) Accomplishment The pursuit and achievement of goals that hold personal significance contribute to a sense of accomplishment. This element emphasizes the importance of striving for and attaining meaningful objectives in life.

Moreover, Pordee (2021) has explained that a happy learning pattern (FART) consists of four components: 1) Family relationship 2) Achievement motivation 3) Relationship between students and peers and 4) Teacher teaching quality.

### *Happiness scale*

The Thai Happiness Index (TMHI-15) (Department of Mental health, 2007) is a tool used to measure the overall happiness and well-being of individuals in Thailand. These indicators help create a comprehensive view of individual and societal happiness, allowing policymakers to better understand and improve the well-being of the population. The Thai Happiness Index consists of a total of 15 questions with four responses ranging from "Not at all" to "Very much."

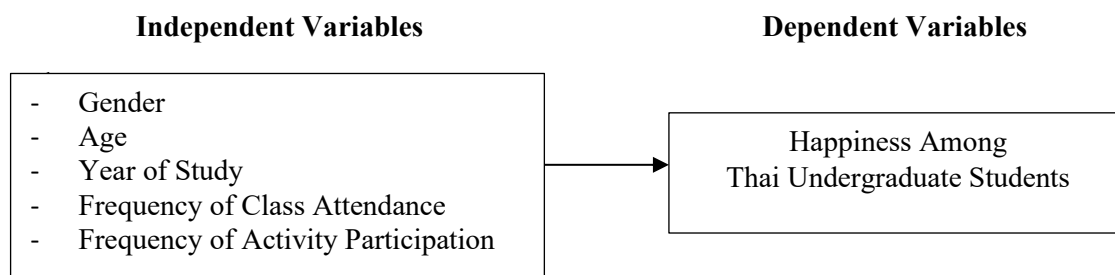


Figure 1: Conceptual Farmwork

## Methodology

### *Population and Sample Group*

The population consisted of 946 undergraduate students enrolled in the Faculty of Education during the second semester of the 2023 academic year. The sample size was calculated using Yamane's formula at a 0.5 confidence level and selected using the cluster random sampling technique, resulting in 289 students. To minimize sampling errors, the research team increased the sample size to 314.

### *Research Instruments and Quality Assessment*

The happiness measurement scale was developed from the Happiness Index of the Department of Mental Health, Thailand. It includes two sections: Part 1: General Information, which covers gender, age, duration of study, employment, class attendance regularity, and participation in activities. Part 2: Happiness Measurement, which consists of 15 items. Each item is rated on a 4-point scale, where 0 indicates the lowest level of happiness and 3 indicates the highest level. The happiness level is evaluated based on the following criteria:

#### *Average Score per Item*

- 0.0 – 1.00 point indicates low happiness
- 1.01 – 2.00 point indicates moderate happiness
- 2.01 – 3.00 point indicates high happiness

#### *Total Score*

- 0 – 15 point indicates low happiness
- 16 – 30 point indicates moderate happiness
- 31 – 45 point indicates high happiness

Three experts reviewed the content validity, with the content validity index ranging from 0.66 to 1.0. The reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, resulting in a value of 0.72.

### *Data Analysis*

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean, percentage, and standard deviation, to assess general information and the happiness levels of the sample group. T-tests and one-way ANOVA were used to identify differences between variables and the happiness levels of the sample group.

## Results

### *1. General Information of the Sample Group*

Table 1: General Information of the Sample Group

	<i>Frequence</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	142	42.22

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Female	165	52.54
Prefer not to specify	7	2.23
<i>Age</i>		
Under 21 years	102	32.48
21- 25 years	104	33.12
26-30 years	72	22.93
31- 35 years	18	5.73
36- 40 years	10	3.19
41 – 45 years	1	0.32
46 – 50 years	-	-
51 years and above	7	2.23
<i>Duration of Study</i>		
1 - 2 years	105	33.44
3 - 4 years	147	46.82
5 - 6 years	44	14.01
More than 6 years	18	5.73
<i>Finding Income During Study</i>		
Employed	225	71.66
Unemployed	89	28.34
<i>Class Attendance</i>		
Attended every class (100%)	97	30.89
Attended frequently (80% > 100%)	108	34.39
Attended occasionally (50% > 80%)	60	19.11
Attended sometimes (> 50%)	28	8.92
Did not attend at all (0% - 10%)	21	6.69
<i>Activities Participation</i>		
Every time (100%)	42	13.38
Frequently (80% > 100%)	122	38.85
Occasionally (50% > 80%)	85	27.07
Rarely (> 50%)	44	14.01
Did not participate at all (0% - 10%)	21	6.69

Table 1 shows the general information of the sample group. It was found that the majority of the sample group were female, with 165 individuals accounting for 52.54%, followed by 142 males, making up 42.22%. Additionally, 7 individuals preferred not to specify their gender, representing 2.23%. Most of the sample group were aged between 21-25 years, with 104 individuals accounting for 33.12%, followed by those under 21 years old, with 102 individuals making up 32.48%, and those aged 26-30 years, with 72 individuals accounting for 22.93%.

The majority of the sample group were 147 students studying in the third or fourth year, accounting for 46.82%, followed by 105 students studying in the first or second year, making up 33.44%. Most of the sample group earned an income while studying, with 225 individuals representing 71.66%, while 89 individuals, or 28.34%, did not have an income during their studies.

The majority of the sample group frequently attended classes, with 108 individuals accounting for 34.39%, followed by those who attended every class, with 97 individuals representing 30.89%. Additionally, 60 individuals, or 19.11%, attended classes occasionally. Regarding participation in faculty and university activities, most of the sample group frequently participated, with 122 individuals accounting for 38.85%, followed by those who participated occasionally, with 85 individuals representing 27.07%, and those who rarely participated, with 44 individuals making up 14.01%.

## 2. Happiness Levels of Undergraduate Students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University

Table 2: frequency of happiness levels.

<i>Level of happiness</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
poor happiness (0 – 15 score)		
fair happiness (16 – 30 score)	8	2.54
high happiness (31– 45 score)	306	97.46
<i>(Mean = 41.56 S.D. = 4.16)</i>		

Table 2 indicates that the majority of undergraduate students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University, 308 students, have a high level of happiness, accounting for 97.46%. Additionally, 8 students have a fair level of happiness, representing 2.54%. The average happiness level of the sample group is also found to be high.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of happiness levels.

<i>item</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>meaning</i>
1. I'm happy with my life	2.68	0.56	high
2. Studying makes me feel valuable	2.89	0.31	high
3. I'm healthy and ready to study	2.81	0.50	high
4. I'm satisfy and confident with my shape and body	2.60	0.68	high
5. I have good relationship with my friends in university	2.68	0.70	high
6. Studying makes me progress in life	2.91	0.29	high
7. I can cope with problem in my studies	2.79	0.43	high
8. I can control my emotion when facing some study problem	2.83	0.47	high
9. I can manage my activities daily living for prepare my study	2.82	0.41	high
10. I'm happy when study with my classmate	2.78	0.56	high
11. I'm happy with new class and new classmate	2.61	0.62	high
12. I know that my studies are useful and can be applied in practice.	2.88	0.33	high
13. I have friends and teachers who can help me when I got study problems	2.73	0.56	high
14. I feel that university is safe for my living	2.69	0.58	high
15. I can manage time for my relaxation after class	2.78	0.48	high

Table 3 shows the itemized happiness levels of students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University. It was found that the sample group had a high level of happiness in all items. The item "Studying makes me progress in life" had the highest score ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $S.D. = 0.29$ ), followed by "Studying makes me feel valuable" ( $M = 2.89$ ,  $S.D. = 0.31$ ), and "I know that my studies are useful and can be applied in practice" ( $M = 2.88$ ,  $S.D. = 0.33$ ).

Table 4: The differences between variables regarding the fundamental characteristics of undergraduate students and their happiness levels.

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
<i>Sex</i>					
Between groups	81.550	2	40.775	3.607	.028*
Within groups	3526.735	312	11.304		
Total	3608.286	314			
<i>Age</i>					
Between groups	249.648	5	49.930	4.594	.000*
Within groups	3358.637	309	10.869		
Total		314			

	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
<i>Year of Study</i>					
Between groups	349.348	2	49.390	11.113	.000*
Within groups	3258.937	312	10.869		
Total	3608.285	314			
<i>Class Attendance</i>					
Between groups	949.221	4	237.305	27.666	.000*
Within groups	2659.064	310	8.578		
Total	3608.286	314			
<i>Activity participation</i>					
Between groups	930.732	4	232.683	26.939	.000*
Within groups	2677.553	310	8.637		
Total	3608.286	314			

Table 4 shows the differences between variables such as gender, age, year of study, class attendance frequency, and activity participation frequency, and the happiness levels of undergraduate students at the Faculty of Education. It was found that the happiness levels of undergraduate students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University, varied significantly based on age, year of study, class attendance frequency, and activity participation frequency, with statistical significance at the .05 level.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to 1) examine the happiness levels of students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok, Thailand, and 2) investigate the differences between various variables and student happiness. This exploratory research utilized descriptive statistics, t-tests, and one-way ANOVA for data analysis.

The results indicated that the students reported a high level of happiness (mean = 33.38, S.D. = 3.39). Differences in happiness levels were found to be statistically significant at the .05 level concerning age, year of study, frequency of class attendance, and frequency of participation in activities. When comparing the happiness of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education by gender, a significant difference was found in one pair at the .05 level. Age comparisons revealed significant differences in one pair at the same level. The researcher also found significant differences in two pairs when comparing happiness levels by year of study at the .05 level. Additionally, comparisons based on class attendance frequency showed significant differences in three pairs at the .01 level. Lastly, participation in faculty and university activities was compared, revealing significant differences in one pair at the .05 level. These findings highlight the impact of demographic and participation factors on student happiness within the educational setting.

When comparing the happiness levels of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education by gender, a significant difference was found in one pair at the .05 level, specifically between the female group and the non-binary group (Sig = .028). In comparing happiness levels by age, significant differences were observed in one pair at the .05 level, specifically between the age group of 36-40 years and the group aged 51 years and older (Sig = .000). Further analysis of year of study revealed significant differences in two pairs at the .05 level: between the 1st-2nd year group and the 3rd-4th year group (Sig = .000), and between the 3rd-4th year group and the 4th-5th year group (Sig = .016).

Additionally, when comparing happiness based on the frequency of class attendance, significant differences were found in three pairs at the .01 level: between the group that never attended classes and the group that attended every time (Sig = .000), between the occasional attendees and the group that attended every time (Sig = .004), and between the group that attended sometimes and the group that attended every time (Sig = .000).

## Discussion

1. The majority of undergraduate students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University, show a high level of happiness. This indicates that they are satisfied with their academic life and daily routines, experiencing more positive thoughts and feelings than negative ones. This finding aligns with the 2020 Thai Mental Health Survey, which found a correlation between educational attainment and mental health (National Statistical Office, 2020). In other words, higher academic success leads to greater happiness. The happiness observed in the students corresponds with the characteristics of happy individuals as defined by Maneesri and Boonyasiriwat (2017), including high self-esteem, a sense of control over their lives, optimism, and openness.

When examining specific aspects, it was found that students placed significant importance on the sense of value and progress in life that education brings, particularly in terms of applying their knowledge to their future careers. This is consistent with the findings of Patphol (2003), who discovered a positive relationship between self-esteem, adaptability, and attitudes toward teachers, all of which contribute positively to happiness in learning. When considering personal factors, it was found that most students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University, work while studying to support their costs for education. This dual responsibility provides motivation for learning, helps students recognize the value of their education, and contributes to their personal growth, ultimately leading to future success. This concept is supported by Panich (2014), who explained that motivation significantly impacts university students. Motivation directs attention, determination, and learning behavior, and when students see the value in their learning goals and the path to success, this motivation can drive them toward success and result in happiness in their studies.

The study also found that self-management skills—whether physical, emotional, or related to daily life—are crucial factors that contribute to students' happiness in their studies. This aligns with the ideas of Sansupa and Kuntawong (2021), who describe self-management as a key skill for personal development across various situations. Self-management is linked with life success, the ability to handle arising issues, and the overall ability to live happily, maintain self-worth, and manage undesirable emotions and behaviors.

2. According to the differences between variables: gender, age, year of study, class attendance frequency, and activity participation frequency, it was found that the happiness of undergraduate students at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University, varies with age, year of study, class attendance frequency, and activity participation frequency. These differences can be explained as follows:

2.1 Age: Students of different ages experience varying levels of happiness. Ramkhamhaeng University, being an open-admission institution, admits students regardless of age, resulting in a diverse age range among students. This diversity affects learning abilities and, consequently, happiness levels. Cognitive development varies with age ranges, impacting learning experiences and happiness. As Pasu Decharin (2020) explains, younger students are motivated by future goals and hopes, while older students focus on maintaining their current achievements and preventing losses.

2.2 Year of Study: The year of study reflects students' learning experience. This means higher-year students generally have more diverse learning experiences than newcomers. Nettle (2005, cited in Gray, Thongthai and Suwannoppakao, 2010) notes that happiness involves emotions such as joy, sorrow, and life satisfaction, with mood changing based on events, which can be happiness or sadness. Life satisfaction, however, remains more stable as it results from evaluating one's life overall.

2.3 Class Attendance: Ramkhamhaeng University does not enforce mandatory attendance, but attending classes improves the chances of passing courses and provides better opportunities for interaction and exam preparation. Frequent attendance at lectures leads to higher academic success and positive learning outcomes. Moussa and Ali (2022) studied the relationship between educational achievement and UAE students' happiness. It was found that high levels of happiness are associated with educational



success. Flynn and MacLeod (2015) surveyed the relating factors of students' happiness and also found that self-esteem, academic success, and financial stability are factors that influence student happiness.

2.4 Activity Participation: Participation in faculty-organized activities serves as an extracurricular learning opportunity, enhancing practical application of knowledge and building relationships among students and between students and teachers. These relationships contribute to a positive learning environment. Pordee (2021) describes a happy learning pattern (FART) as requiring good relationships between students and peers, which support mutual assistance and involvement in decision-making about class activities. Regular participation in activities fosters better peer relationships and collective happiness in learning compared to sporadic involvement.

### Limitations of research

1. This research collected data from undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education who were enrolled in the 2nd semester of the 2023. For future studies, it is advisable to expand the sample to include students from other faculties or different universities to obtain diverse data and enable comparisons of student happiness across varying contexts.
2. This study utilized a general happiness questionnaire for data collection. In future research, developing measurement tools that can assess happiness in more detailed dimensions will enhance the accuracy of the findings.

### Research suggestion

This study is conducted within the context of a market-oriented university, which features a different teaching and learning management system compared to traditional universities in Thailand. Therefore, educators need to understand the context, readiness, and limitations of the students, as well as consider the teaching and learning management system carefully. This understanding is essential to create opportunities for effective learning and to promote student happiness in their educational experiences.

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# Guidelines for Developing Classroom Research Competency of Pre-Service Teachers, Ramkhamhaeng University

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## ABSTRACT

Pre-service teachers in Thailand are expected to be able to undertake research projects in the classroom. However, many still lack the understanding and skills required to carry out research that addresses student learning problems. This research aimed to 1) study and prioritize pre-service teachers' needs for developing competencies in conducting classroom research, and 2) provide guidelines for improving the research competencies offered to pre-service teachers. The participants in the study were divided into two groups: pre-service teachers and university lecturers who were experts in pedagogy and research. To achieve the first objective, 271 pre-service teachers from the Faculty of Education at Ramkhamhaeng University in Thailand were invited to complete a questionnaire designed to assess their competency development needs for conducting classroom research. For the second objective, seven university lecturers were invited to participate in a focus group discussion to share their ideas and suggestions. The questionnaire results were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods and the Modified Priority Needs Index (PNIModified) technique, while the findings from the focus group discussion were thematically categorized and interpreted to inform the guidelines. The findings revealed that pre-service teachers had needs for resources to support classroom research in the following order: skills competencies, knowledge competencies, and attitude competencies. Furthermore, the guidelines for improving research competencies among pre-service teachers were suggested in three areas: 1) Knowledge: designing course content to encompass essential knowledge and assessing students' understanding; 2) Skills: providing practical training during classes, conducting workshops, offering mentoring, and facilitating peer learning exchanges; and 3) Attitudes: fostering a research-driven learning community through the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process.

**Keywords:** Classroom Research, Competencies. Pre-Service Teachers

## Introduction

The development of professional knowledge and experience standards for teachers was announced by the Teacher Council (No. 4) B.E. 2562 (2019) in six areas, including the concept of the philosophy of sufficiency economy to address global changes. These areas of the teaching profession included educational psychology and counseling psychology, aimed at analyzing and developing learners according to their potential; curriculum and teaching science; digital technology in learning management; learning evaluation and research for problem-solving and learner development; the use of Thai and English for communication; and the use of digital technology for education, as well as the design and implementation of education quality assurance. Additionally, teachers were required to develop competencies in measuring and evaluating student learning outcomes, using these results to further develop learners, applying research findings in learning management, and conducting research to improve teaching, learning, and learner development (Prachagool, Nuangchalerm, Subramaniam, and Dostal, 2016).

According to these professional standards, pre-service teachers in Thailand were expected to gain knowledge, teaching experience, and competencies in conducting classroom research projects. These requirements were designed to support student learning. However, pre-service teachers still lacked sufficient knowledge and skills related to the teaching profession, particularly in competencies related to conducting research projects. Although pre-service teachers enrolled in courses on educational

measurement and research (Thomas, 2017), they found it difficult to apply the knowledge, skills, and competencies they learned during field experience (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). To support the development of pre-service teachers' research competencies, this research aimed to study their needs and provide guidelines for improving their ability to conduct classroom research projects. Although there were research studies addressing teacher competency development, published research specifically on pre-service teachers conducting classroom projects was limited. This study seeks to contribute further insights to help pre-service teachers develop their research knowledge and competencies.

## **Literature Review**

### **The definition of 'research' and 'competency'**

Research encompasses several critical aspects. As Creswell & Guetterman (2019) stated, it enhances knowledge and improves performance. In the field of education, research enables teachers to refine the quality of teaching and learning, addressing classroom challenges to meet educational objectives. Classroom research, in particular, is a systematic approach to resolving various issues that emerge in teaching and learning. When teachers face difficulties, this type of research equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their duties more effectively and to improve student learning, ultimately raising the standard of teaching (Bryman, 2016).

Modern teachers must possess strong research skills. Traimongkolkul (2000) noted that classroom research is a form of operational research aimed at improving or modifying teaching and learning management to enhance quality. Instructors are responsible for conducting research in their own classrooms, with the first to benefit being the instructors themselves. Both students and teachers can use research as a tool for making informed decisions in teaching and learning. Vongvanich (2012) added that classroom research enables teachers to address issues that arise in the classroom and use the findings to improve teaching and learning, thus maximizing the benefits for learners. Research must be conducted promptly, with results applied immediately, providing feedback on the performance of both the researcher and their peers (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). This process fosters an environment where teachers and learners improve together through critique, discussion, and knowledge exchange (Denscombe, 2017).

Competency, defined as a behavioral trait, arises from knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and dispositions—internal personality traits that enable individuals to achieve exceptional performance, succeed in life, and contribute effectively to their organization (Kumar, 2019). The Secretariat of the Council of Teachers has clearly outlined the professional competencies required of teachers, which include both core and functional competencies, as specified in the Regulations of the Council of Teachers on Professional Standards (No. 4) B.E. 2562 (2020, pp. 10-14).

### **The Concept of Competencies Regarding Doing a Research Project in the Classroom: a Lens of Pre-Service Teachers**

Competence, or ability, in the teaching profession is one of the critical characteristics needed to develop effective and high-quality teachers (Chaowattanakul, 2010; Thomas, 2017). According to the standards of professional knowledge and experience, the knowledge and competence of teacher practitioners include: 1) understanding changes in the global context; 2) psychology, developmental psychology, and counseling psychology for analyzing and developing learners according to their potential; 3) curriculum and teaching science; 4) measurement, evaluation, and research to solve problems and foster learner development; 5) the use of Thai and English for communication, as well as digital technology for education; and 6) the design and implementation of quality assurance and learning management in education.

Teaching involves planning and managing learning to develop students into intelligent and innovative individuals capable of systematically reporting the results of quality development. Teachers must create a positive learning environment that considers learners' well-being, fosters collaboration with others, and encourages participation in professional development activities (Bergman, 1996; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

The ability to conduct classroom research is a crucial attribute for students in the teaching profession. It encompasses the behavioral characteristics of instructors, derived from their knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes toward conducting research in the classroom. Teachers assume the role of researchers, applying research findings to systematically solve problems in their classes (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Research competency in the classroom can be categorized into three aspects:

1. **Knowledge:** Refers to the knowledge required to conduct classroom research, including statistical knowledge.
2. **Skills:** Refers to the ability to conduct classroom research, including research methodology, practical skills as a researcher, computational thinking, the use of computer programs, language skills, and applying research results in the classroom.
3. **Attitudes:** Refers to the opinions on conducting classroom research, including the appreciation of its benefits and interest in conducting research.

Given the importance of the reasons mentioned above, the researcher concludes that studying research competency among teacher professional experience trainees is essential (Woolfolk, 2016). The findings will provide foundational information for education lecturers to enhance students' research competencies in the classroom and will serve as valuable input for improving the teacher education curriculum for the Teacher Professional Experience Training Unit at the Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University, in the future.

## Objectives

1. To determine and prioritize the research competency needs of pre-service teachers.
2. To establish guidelines for the development of research competencies in pre-service teachers.

## Methodology

This research on developing research competence in the classroom for pre-service teachers employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data collection through questionnaires and qualitative data collection through focus group discussions (Plano Clark and Ivankova, 2016). The process involved the following steps:

### Step 1: Assessing the Needs

1. **Study of Relevant Documents and Research:** The researcher reviewed documents and studies related to classroom research and concepts concerning the assessment of students' needs. This review helped define the conceptual framework for the research and guided the creation of the tools used in the needs assessment.
2. **Population and Sample:**  
**Population:** The population comprised students who were practicing teacher professional experience in the second semester of the 2023 academic year across all courses of the Faculty of Education at Ramkhamhaeng University, totaling 350 individuals.  
**Sample:** The sample consisted of 271 pre-service teachers from the same population, selected through purposive sampling. These students, who were willing to cooperate in answering the questionnaire, were chosen because they were actively conducting classroom research alongside their pre-service teaching.
3. **Creation and Development of Assessment Tools:**  
 The tools used for quantitative data collection were questionnaires designed by analysts to explore the needs of pre-service teachers conducting classroom research. The research focused on identifying necessary competencies, including knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
  - o **Part 1:** A questionnaire gathering general information about the teacher professional experience trainees, including their majors and enrolled courses.

- **Part 2:** A needs assessment for pre-service teachers who want to conduct classroom research. This section contained 43 questions addressing three main areas: 1) knowledge, 2) skills, and 3) attitude. The questions used a 5-point rating scale (most, high, medium, little, least) and were based on theories related to classroom research competencies. The questionnaire was evaluated by experts, showing a concordance index between 0.67 and 1.00, which is greater than 0.5 (Bergman, J., 1996). The reliability, measured by Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Cronbach, L. J., 1990), was 0.989.

#### 4. **Data**

#### **Collection:**

Data were collected using a questionnaire to identify and rank the importance of research competency needs among pre-service teachers. The researcher administered the questionnaire electronically (via Google Forms) during a group seminar held from March 11-15, 2024, with a total of 271 responses received.

#### 5. **Data**

#### **Analysis:**

The researcher analyzed the basic statistical values from Part 1 of the questionnaire and prioritized the data from Part 2 using the Essential Needs Prioritization Index (ENPI). The ENPI helps assessors identify problems or needs that require urgent attention. The Modified Priority Needs Index (PNIModified), a method refined by Suvimol Vongvanich (2007), was used to calculate the index, where  $PNIModified = (I-D)/D$ , with "I" representing the expected condition and "D" the current actual condition.

## Step 2: Developing Guidelines for Research Competency in the Classroom

To address the second objective, the researcher conducted a focus group with seven purposively selected participants. The data analysis involved a thematic analysis to identify approaches for improving research performance in the classroom, focusing on knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to conducting classroom research (Clarke & Braun, 2017).

## RESULTS

The results of this data analysis are presented to address the research objectives, divided into three parts as follows:

### Part 1: Analysis of Respondents' General Status Using Basic Statistics

This section includes the main basic statistical values, such as the frequency distribution and the percentage of respondents' general status, classified by gender, major, and enrolled courses.

*Table 1: General Status of the Respondents*

variable	frequency	percent
1. Gender		
male	50	18.45
female	221	81.55
Total	271	100.00
2. Major		
Early Childhood Education	75	27.68
Primary Education	70	25.82
Social Studies	20	7.38
Thai	49	18.08
English	8	2.95
Chinese	4	1.48
science	12	4.43
Art Education	1	0.37
physical education	14	5.17
vocational education	1	0.37
mathematics	17	6.27

variable	frequency	percent
Total	271	100
3. Courses Enrolled		
Teaching Seminar 1	77	28.59
Teaching Seminar 2	194	71.59
Total	271	100.00

## Part 2: Results of the Needs Analysis of Classroom Research Competency Development

### 2.1 Overall Competency Needs

The necessary requirements for developing research competency in the classroom were assessed in three areas: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Table 2 presents the essential needs for developing classroom research competencies in an overview of these three areas.

*Table 2: Assessment of the Needs for Classroom Research Competency Development (Overview)*

Competency	Expected conditions	Realistic conditions	$PNI_{Modified}$ (N=271)	Priorities
	(I)	(D)	(I-D)/D	
Knowledge	4.24	3.72	0.139	2
Skill	4.27	3.73	0.144	1
Attitude	4.43	4.10	0.080	3

### 2.2 Competency Development Needs in Knowledge

Table 3 presents the needs for competency development in knowledge. It was found that the highest need is for knowledge and understanding of research report writing in the classroom ( $PNI_{Modified} = 0.191$ ), followed by data collection ( $PNI_{Modified} = 0.184$ ) and data analysis using statistics ( $PNI_{Modified} = 0.176$ ).

*Table 3: Assessment of the Needs for Research Competency Development in Knowledge*

article	Classroom Research Performance Knowledge	Expected conditions		Realistic conditions		$PNI_{Modified}$	Priorities
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1	Knowledge and understanding of the meaning and importance of research in the classroom	4.37	0.69	4.31	0.81	0.014	13
2	Knowledge and understanding of the nature of research in the classroom	4.37	0.69	4.35	0.81	0.005	14
3	Knowledge and understanding of the research process in the classroom	4.27	0.69	3.72	0.92	0.148	6
4	Knowledge and understanding of problem formulation in classroom research	4.24	0.75	3.74	0.93	0.134	10
5	Knowledge and understanding of the purpose of classroom research	4.23	0.81	3.69	0.93	0.146	7
6	Knowledge and understanding of the hypothesis in classroom research	4.20	0.77	3.70	0.94	0.135	9
7	Knowledge and understanding of research variables in the classroom	4.16	0.81	3.61	1.01	0.152	5
8	Knowledge and understanding of the conceptual framework of classroom research	4.25	0.79	3.73	0.96	0.139	8
9	Knowledge and understanding of research sources and computerized information for research	4.31	0.74	3.82	0.93	0.128	12

article	Classroom Research Performance Knowledge	Expected conditions		Realistic conditions		PNI <sub>Modified</sub>	Priorities
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
10	Knowledge and understanding of the principles of tool creation for classroom research	4.23	0.77	3.64	0.99	0.162	4
11	Knowledge and understanding of research data collection	4.25	0.81	3.59	1.02	0.184	2
12	Knowledge and understanding of data analysis using statistics for research	4.20	0.80	3.57	1.04	0.176	3
13	Knowledge and understanding of writing research reports in classroom	4.24	0.80	3.56	0.99	0.191	1
14	Knowledge and understanding of the use of the results of research in the classroom	4.16	0.84	3.68	0.92	0.130	11

### 2.3 Necessary Requirements and Results of Sequential Arrangement of Research Competency Development in Skills

Table 4 presents the necessary requirements for developing research competencies in various skill areas. It was found that the most anticipated need for research competency development in skill classes is the ability to investigate and analyze problems in the classroom by observing student behavior, conducting exams, and gathering information from teachers and parents. The minimum realistic requirement is the ability to use computers for data analysis and to apply research results to solve classroom problems.

The skill with the highest PNI<sub>Modified</sub> value, which indicates the priority for research competency development, is the ability to investigate and analyze classroom problems by observing student behavior and gathering information from teachers and parents (PNI<sub>Modified</sub> = 0.191). This is followed by the ability to apply research results to solve classroom problems (PNI<sub>Modified</sub> = 0.212) and the ability to experiment and collect data systematically (PNI<sub>Modified</sub> = 0.205).

*Table 4: Results of the Assessment of Necessary Requirements for Research Competency Development in Skills*

article	Classroom Research Performance Skills	Expected conditions		Realistic conditions		PNI <sub>Modified</sub>	Priorities
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1	Investigate and analyze problems in the classroom by observing student behavior, exams, and gathering information from teachers and parents	4.34	0.80	3.64	0.94	0.191	1
2	Research Design : Determine the procedure and duration of the research	4.27	0.69	3.85	0.97	0.110	13
3	Conduct systematic research according to the operation plan	4.26	0.73	3.84	0.94	0.110	13
4	Identify the problem and its significance appropriately	4.19	0.74	3.76	0.94	0.113	12
5	Define the purpose and hypothesis correctly	4.27	0.72	3.78	0.92	0.128	11
6	research Study information related to research systematically	4.31	0.70	3.93	0.89	0.098	16
7	Observe phenomena and changes in the classroom	4.27	0.71	3.89	0.96	0.098	16
8	Identify the variables in the research clearly	4.24	0.70	3.84	0.93	0.106	15



article	Classroom Research Performance Skills	Expected conditions		Realistic conditions		PNI <sub>Modified</sub>	Priorities
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
9	Clearly identify the benefits of applying research.	4.30	0.69	3.78	0.93	0.139	9
10	Study theoretical concepts and methods to solve research problems	4.31	0.70	3.82	0.94	0.129	10
11	Develop tools to collect quality data	4.27	0.71	3.65	0.99	0.172	7
12	Select appropriate statistics to analyze data and answer research questions	4.24	0.70	3.59	1.02	0.182	6
13	Experiment and collect data systematically	4.30	0.69	3.57	1.04	0.205	3
14	Use computers to analyze data	4.25	0.73	3.56	1.00	0.194	4
15	Summarize and discuss research results.	4.19	0.74	3.67	0.94	0.142	8
16	Identify guidelines for using research results in the classroom.	4.27	0.72	3.61	1.01	0.183	5
17	Apply research results to solve problems in classroom	4.31	0.70	3.56	1.03	0.212	2
18	Utilize research results in other contexts or build on findings.	4.27	0.71	3.90	0.94	0.097	18

## 2.4 Necessary Requirements and Results of Sequencing of Research Competency Development in Attitude

Table 5 presents the necessary requirements for developing research competencies in the attitude category. It was found that the most anticipated need for research competency development in this category is pride when research is successfully completed. The minimum realistic condition is recognizing the value of research and understanding the benefits of research in solving classroom problems.

The attitude with the highest PNI<sub>Modified</sub> value, indicating the priority for research competency development, is recognizing the value of research (PNI<sub>Modified</sub> = 0.105). This is followed by helping teachers develop teaching and learning systematically (PNI<sub>Modified</sub> = 0.097) and recognizing the benefits of research in solving classroom problems (PNI<sub>Modified</sub> = 0.093).

*Table 5: Results of the Assessment of Necessary Requirements for Research Competency Development in Attitude*

article	Classroom Research Performance Attitude	Expected conditions		Realistic conditions		PNI <sub>Modified</sub>	Priorities
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
1	Recognize the value of research	4.34	0.74	3.92	1.00	0.105	1
2	Recognize the benefits of research in solving classroom problems	4.28	0.81	3.92	1.04	0.093	3
3	Maintain morale and motivation to complete research in the classroom	4.32	0.73	4.02	0.94	0.075	6
4	Enjoy and find satisfaction in classroom research	4.49	0.66	4.20	0.83	0.069	9
5	Conducting classroom research helps teachers improve teaching and learning systematically	4.53	0.67	4.13	0.86	0.097	2
6	Conducting classroom research helps to change and develop teachers' learning management behavior	4.38	0.71	4.11	0.84	0.066	10

article	Classroom Research Performance Attitude	Expected conditions		Realistic conditions		PNIModified	Priorities
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
7	Conducting classroom research is a guide to developing innovation in the classroom	4.43	0.68	4.11	0.84	0.077	5
8	Feel pride when research is successfully completed	4.55	0.64	4.25	0.88	0.071	8
9	Learners benefit from conducting research in the classroom.	4.52	0.65	4.21	0.88	0.074	7
10	Research contributes to the creation of academic work	4.44	0.75	4.20	0.83	0.058	11
11	Published and utilized research results contribute to creating a learning community	4.49	0.65	4.13	0.86	0.088	4

### Part 3: Results of the Analysis of Guidelines for Developing Research Competencies in the Classroom of Pre-service teachers

This section presents the results of content analysis from the Focus Group process, which aimed to develop alternative conclusions as guidelines for improving the classroom research competencies of pre-service teachers in the areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The findings from the group discussion are as follows:

*Table 6: Guidelines for Developing Research Competency in the Classroom of Pre-Service Teachers*

Research Competencies	Information from focus group	
	Development Information Issues	Guidelines for Developing Research Competencies in the Classroom
<b>Knowledge:</b> Cognition and understanding of classroom research.	1. Knowledge and understanding of the core principles of classroom research and research patterns. 2. Analysis of learners' problems. 3. Finding research documents and related information. 4. Creating and checking tool quality. 5. Selection of appropriate statistics in research. 6. Data collection.	Develop comprehensive course descriptions for the courses preceding experiential training and assess students' knowledge.
<b>Skills:</b> Expertise in conducting classroom research.	1. Synthesis of knowledge. 2. Use of computer programs and online resources. 3. Designing research that answers research questions. 4. Designing research tools. 5. Conducting research according to the research plan. 6. Observation and thoroughness during research. 7. Writing a research report. 8. Using innovation to solve classroom problems.	1. Practice in courses during classes in a systematic manner and in accordance with the correct research process. 2. Organizing workshops to enhance research skills in the classroom. 3. The person in charge of the course must act as a coach to motivate and guide while conducting research. 4. There is a system for exchanging research experiences between those who have done

Research Competencies	Information from focus group	
	Development Information Issues	Guidelines for Developing Research Competencies in the Classroom
	9. Exchanging research results for teaching and learning development.	research in the classroom and those who have started research in the classroom to create a learning community.
<b>Attitude:</b> Positive mindset towards classroom research.	1. Enjoyment in conducting research. 2. Confidence in research findings and applying them effectively. 3. Enthusiasm for research. 4. Recognizing the benefits and feeling proud of research results.	The PLC (Professional Learning Community) process is a process of creating change caused by three principles : Professional, Learning, and Community, which is the basis of unity, joint effort, co-action and co-learning, and emphasizes best practices.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

1. According to the results of the analysis, the most necessary classroom research resources are practical skills, followed by knowledge and attitude competencies, respectively. The essential practical skills include research methodology, conducting research, computational thinking, using computer programs, language proficiency, and applying research findings in the classroom. The findings indicate that teacher professional experience trainees are actively engaged in classroom research and thus prioritize the practical process required to complete their research, as it is a core component of their teaching practice. Classroom research is an effective technique for developing learners' success because it aims to address learning problems directly within the classroom. It involves identifying a question, solving the problem, and then assessing the outcomes. Moreover, teacher trainees require guidance and supervision from their professors to ensure the successful completion of their research projects. This aligns with the concept described by Haas, S.A., who explained that continuous cooperation with mentors aids individuals in developing practical skills, ultimately enabling them to perform activities proficiently (Haas, S. A., 1992).

2. Based on the analysis of the guidelines for developing research competence in teacher trainees, it was found that the development of research competence in the classroom involves enriching knowledge through course content that covers critical areas and assessing students' understanding. The essential subjects include: 1) Knowledge and understanding of the meaning and importance of classroom research, 2) Knowledge and understanding of the nature of classroom research, and 3) Knowledge and understanding of data analysis using statistics. For skill competencies, practical training is provided through classes, workshops, mentoring, and learning exchanges. This involves analyzing classroom problems by observing student behavior, using computers to analyze data, and applying research results to solve classroom issues. For attitude competencies, a learning community is fostered through the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process, which emphasizes collaboration, collective practice, and best practices. Trainees are encouraged to recognize the value and benefits of research in solving classroom problems. This approach is consistent with the standards set by the Council of Teachers, which highlight that successful teacher and educational personnel development in many countries focuses on continuous professional development for teachers, administrators, educators, and other stakeholders through the "Professional Learning Community (PLC)" (Secretariat of the Guru Sabha, 2018). Therefore, the PLC approach is an effective method for promoting and developing the research competencies of teacher trainees in the classroom. Furthermore, the quality of the Bachelor of Education program, which motivates students to engage in classroom research and adhere to the role of a teacher, including a sense of pride, underscores the importance and benefits of conducting research to enhance teaching and academic knowledge (Conquer Ritcharoon, 2018).

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# Use of Information and Communication Technologies Among Library and Information Science (LIS) Students of Higher Education Institutions in Iloilo City

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## ABSTRACT

This descriptive research study examined the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) among library and information science (LIS) students at Higher Education Institutions in Iloilo City, Philippines, categorizing them by sex, age, and year level of study. The study assessed their competence in using technology, specifically in terms of access to and utilization of ICT, internet access, and the use of online courses and resources provided by the University. The researchers utilized the Commonwealth of Learning (2016) questionnaire, administered via Google Forms, and applied appropriate statistical tools for data analysis and interpretation. The results indicated that most respondents were female, with the majority aged between 21 and 25 years, and all identified as undergraduate students. In terms of technological competencies, LIS students owned personal laptops and smartphones and had access to computers on campus for educational purposes. They reported having internet access at both home and school, using their devices particularly in the library. Most respondents indicated that they spent an average of more than five hours online daily and that all had active social media accounts. Regarding technology use, the majority agreed that technology aids them in deeply understanding subject material, achieving better results in their courses, completing academic requirements more conveniently, and motivating them to explore topics they had not encountered previously. They also felt that technology facilitates easier collaboration with peers, both on and off campus, fosters a stronger connection with their teachers, and improves their long-term career prospects. However, the study also identified limitations and challenges associated with technology that could negatively impact their concentration and focus on important tasks.

**Keywords:** information and communication technologies, technology-enabled learning, library and information science students

## Introduction

"For the past half-century, we have used the term 'information technology' to denote the use of computer hardware and software for handling information. Kline (2004) traces the origin of the term to the business world, where 'management information systems' were developed in the 1960s. More recently, the term 'information and communication technologies' has been adopted, acknowledging the increasing importance of telephones, cable, and satellite transmission in the effective use of information technologies (Davis and Shaw eds., 2010)."

The Commonwealth of Learning initiated technology-enabled learning (TEL) to facilitate the use and integration of technology in educational institutions. TEL refers to the use of technology, systems, platforms, and digital content to enhance and extend student-centered learning. Since the development of the Internet in the 1980s and the inception of the World Wide Web in 1995, there has been significant growth in the adoption of technology within educational institutions, both for distance and on-campus teaching and learning. The adoption of these technologies has now spread to nearly every part of the world (Kirkwood & Price, 2016).

Despite the immense growth in the use of TEL in both developed and developing countries, researchers and educational practitioners continue to express concerns about how effectively technology is being used to improve students' learning experiences (Kirkwood, 2009).

Currently, technology plays a significant role in every aspect of our lives, especially in education, where teaching and learning take place. Many schools and universities have allocated budgets for ICTs to foster educational innovation in the digital era, supporting the needs of millennial learners.

Raja and Nagasubramani (2018) revealed that the use of modern technological tools and equipment enhances students' learning and interactivity, making the transfer of knowledge easier, more convenient, and more effective.

In another study, Al-Bataineh, Anderson, Toledo, and Wellinski (2008), titled "A Study of Technology Integration in the Classroom," highlighted both the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating technology into classroom settings. Their research showed that the most frequently used technologies were email and electronic grade books, while the least utilized were instructional devices.

It is important for teachers in higher education not to assume that students naturally possess the intellectual skills necessary for the effective use of technology in their studies. Jones, Ramanau, Cross, and Healing (2010) caution against equating young people's comfort with technology with their ability to use it appropriately for intellectual development.

Furthermore, we need to carefully examine the criteria we use to determine what constitutes "good" teaching and learning practices (Kirkwood & Price, 2013b, 2015). For instance, why does technology-supported learning successfully engage students in some instances but fail in others? What elements inform the design of successful learning experiences with technology that may be lacking in less successful cases? (Kirkwood & Price, 2012; Price & Kirkwood, 2014).

Additionally, students in Library and Information Science (LIS) programs are expected to develop professional competencies related to their knowledge of information resources, access, technology, and management, using this expertise to provide high-quality information services and resources.

The Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) program focuses on the study, development, deployment, and management of information resources in print, non-print, electronic, and digital formats, as well as related services. Graduates of this program are prepared to apply information technology to basic library operations and functions (CMO, No. 24, s2015).

Currently, the BLIS program includes six ICT courses in its curriculum, classifying it within the discipline of information technology education. However, despite these ICT courses, LIS students still have room for improvement in their use of technology.

Therefore, this research was conducted to assess LIS students' competence in using technologies, particularly in terms of access to and use of information and communication technologies, Internet access, use of ICTs, and utilization of online courses and resources provided by the University.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to determine LIS students' competence in using technology. Specifically, it sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the students' characteristics in terms of gender, age, and year level of study at the University?
2. What are the students' perceptions regarding access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), including Internet access, and how do BLIS students perceive the use of ICTs?
3. What are the limitations and issues encountered by LIS students in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)?

## Information and Communication Technologies Theories

### Online Collaborative Theory

The convergence of constructivist approaches to learning and the development of the Internet has given rise to a specific form of constructivist teaching, initially referred to as computer-mediated communication (CMC) or networked learning, which has since evolved into what Harasim (2012) calls Online Collaborative Learning Theory (OCL).

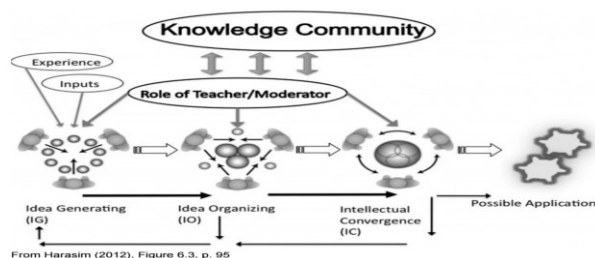
OCL illustrates how students engage in collaborative processes during online lesson delivery, facilitated by the instructor. Students can explore various learning strategies, such as brainstorming, comparing, and analyzing their ideas, to actively manage their learning experience. In this approach, the teacher acts primarily as a facilitator, supporting students as needed throughout the class.

OCL builds upon and integrates theories of cognitive development that emphasize conversational learning (Pask, 1975), conditions for deep learning (Marton and Saljö, 1997; Entwistle, 2000), the development of academic knowledge (Laurillard, 2001), and knowledge construction (Scardamalia and Bereiter, 2006).

Since the early days of online learning, some instructors have focused heavily on the communication capabilities of the Internet (see, for instance, Hiltz and Turoff, 1978). Their teaching has been based on the concept of knowledge construction, where knowledge is gradually built, primarily through asynchronous online discussions among students and between students and the instructor (William, 2015).

**Figure 1**

*The Online Collaborative Learning Framework*



### TPaCK Theory

Another significant theoretical foundation is the TPaCK Theory, also known as Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge. This framework focuses on the integration of three key areas: technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge. It aims to prepare students for a technology-driven world by facilitating the seamless integration of these three components. The successful blending of technology, content, and pedagogy is seen as crucial for effective teaching. Santos and Castro (2021) applied the TPaCK framework to assess the effectiveness of lesson delivery with technology integration.

This theory outlines the knowledge teachers need to effectively instruct their students while utilizing technology. It seeks to identify the specific knowledge required for successful technology integration in teaching, acknowledging the complex and multifaceted nature of teacher expertise. TPaCK builds upon Shulman's (1986) concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge, as further explored by Koehler and Mishra (2006, as cited by Valtonen et al., 2020).

**Figure 2**

*The TPaCK Framework*



(Source: TPACK.Org @ <https://www.powerschool.com/blog/the-tpack-framework-explained-with-classroom-examples/>)

***Significance of the Study***

The results of this study may be beneficial to the following:

Administrators. This study may provide valuable data to administrators, helping them enhance ICT learning facilities and services in higher education institutions (HEIs) in general, and within the BLIS program in particular.

BLIS Faculty. The findings can serve as a foundation for teachers to further improve their instructional delivery through the full implementation of ICT. It will also highlight the importance of developing competence and expertise in the use of technology for teaching and learning.

BLIS Students. The findings will emphasize to LIS students the importance of ICT competency in supporting their academic performance.

Future Researchers. This study will be helpful to those interested in conducting similar research.

**Research Methodology**

This descriptive research study examined the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) among LIS students in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Iloilo City, Philippines. The researchers used a standardized but modified version of the Commonwealth of Learning (2016) questionnaire. The primary aim of this questionnaire was to assess the ICT environment and the enabling policies, including access to information and communication technologies. It also examined the nature of use and preferences for adopting technology in the learning process within educational institutions.

The Questionnaire on Learner Use of Technology was administered to LIS students in HEIs via Google Forms. Descriptive statistics were utilized, and no inferential statistics were applied due to the limited number of LIS student responses.

The research instrument was divided into three parts: Part A gathered background information about the participants, with 9 items focused on LIS students. Part B addressed Access to and Use of ICTs, comprising 8 main questions, further broken down into sub-questions. Part C covered Perceptions of Technology-Enabled Learning, with 3 main questions and 44 sub-questions.

It should be noted, however, that some parameters were excluded from the final analysis due to factors beyond the researchers' control.

***Research Participants***

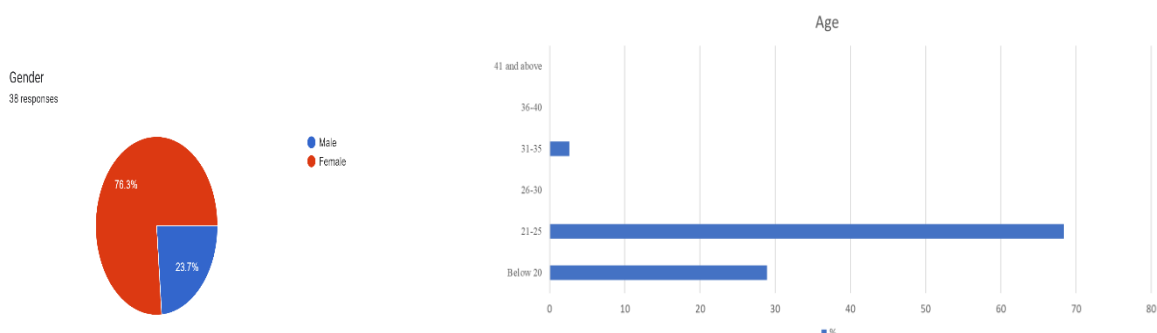
The research participants are LIS students from three higher education institutions that offer the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) program in Iloilo City. Their gender, age, and year of study at the university were also taken into consideration.



## Results and Discussions

### *Respondents' Personal Characteristics in terms of Gender, Age, and Year Level of Study*

Results showed that most of the respondents were female, with the majority ranging between 21 and 25 years old, and all were undergraduate students.



In educational institutions, students are regarded as key stakeholders. Therefore, it is essential to provide ICT tools and infrastructure to facilitate effective instruction and pedagogy for student learning. Jones et al. (2010) argue that it is a misconception to equate young people's proficiency with technology with their ability to use it appropriately for intellectual growth.

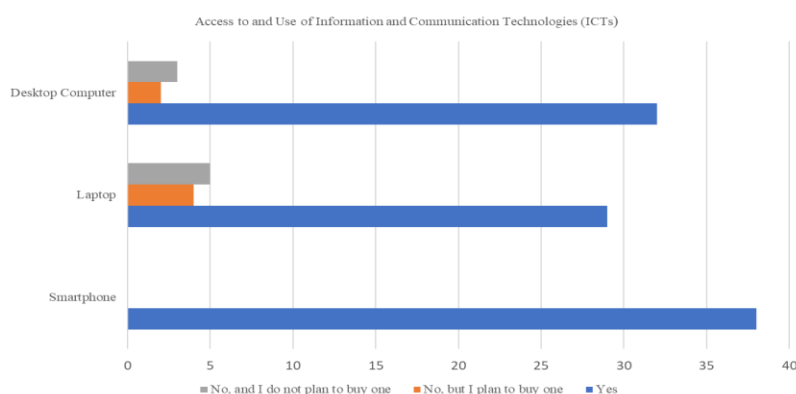
### **Technology-Enabled Learning Environment in terms of Information and Communication Technologies, Internet Access, Perceptions of LIS Students in the Use of ICTs.**

#### **a. Access to and Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)**

Results revealed that, in terms of technology-enabled learning competencies, LIS students have access to personal laptops and smartphones, as well as desktop computers in the university for classroom use and learning purposes. ICT provides assistance and complementary support for both teachers and students. This includes effective learning facilitated by computers, which serve as valuable learning aids (Jorge et al., 2003).

Table 1.

#### *Percentage of LIS Students' access to computers*



Results revealed that 38 of the LIS students have complete access to and use of information and communication technologies. Additionally, whenever there is a problem with any of the technological devices being used in the HEIs, the Center for Information and Communications Support Services of the University is ready to address and troubleshoot issues whenever its services are needed. Moreover, access

to and use of ICT tools in the HEIs are available to all LIS students. When they choose to use the University's facilities, these are accessible at any time, particularly in the library.

Fanghanel (2007) states that despite the availability of technology, teachers remain a valuable asset in the teaching-learning process. The context in which teachers work can significantly influence how technology is used to support learning.

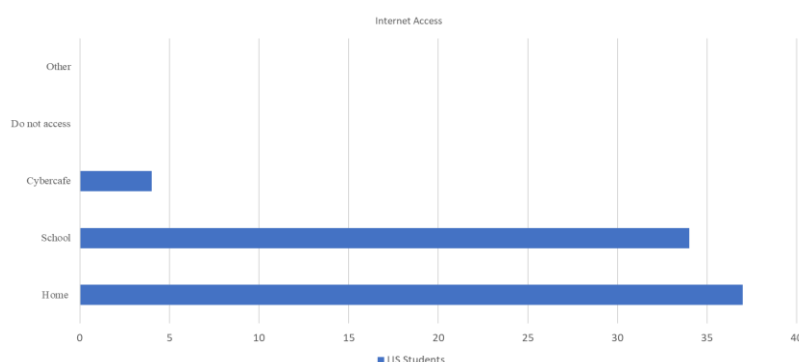
#### a. Internet Access

LIS students have Internet access at home and use their laptops and smartphones both at home and at school. In terms of Internet usage, most of them spend an average of five hours daily.

With the advent of technology, especially the web, it has been observed that LIS students spend more than five hours online each day. The majority complete academic requirements such as assignments, library research, projects, and reporting. They also use the Internet for emails, thesis writing, and social media. As the power of digital technology increases, there are and will continue to be more applications that assist students in their development and learning (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). Table 2 reflects the percentage of LIS students' sources of Internet access.

Table 2.

*Percentage of LIS student' internet access source*



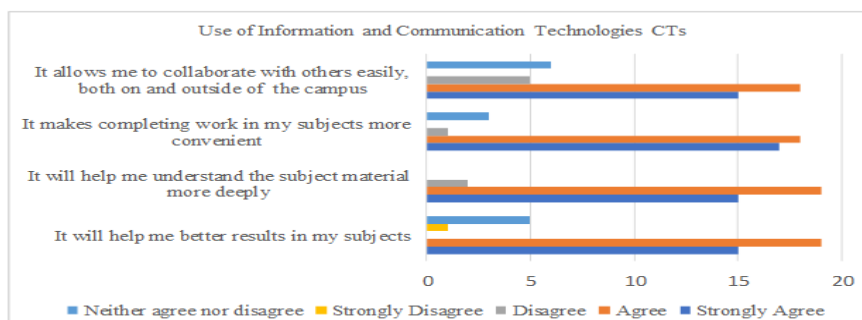
The Internet offers technology-based teaching and learning in various engaging ways, including simulations, data storage, educational videos, the use of databases, mind mapping, guided discovery, brainstorming, music, and the World Wide Web (WWW). These resources enhance the learning process, making it more fulfilling and meaningful (Finger & Trinidad, 2002).

#### b. Perceptions of LIS Students in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies

Results indicated that a majority of respondents agreed that ICTs enhance their understanding of subject material, lead to better academic performance, and facilitate the completion of academic requirements more conveniently. Furthermore, ICTs motivate students to explore previously unencountered topics and enable easy collaboration with peers both on and off campus. They also contribute to the development of information technology and information management skills, foster a stronger connection with their teachers, and improve long-term career and employment prospects. Table 3 illustrates the utilization of technology by LIS students in the learning process.

Table 3.

### LIS students' use of information and communication technologies (ICTs)

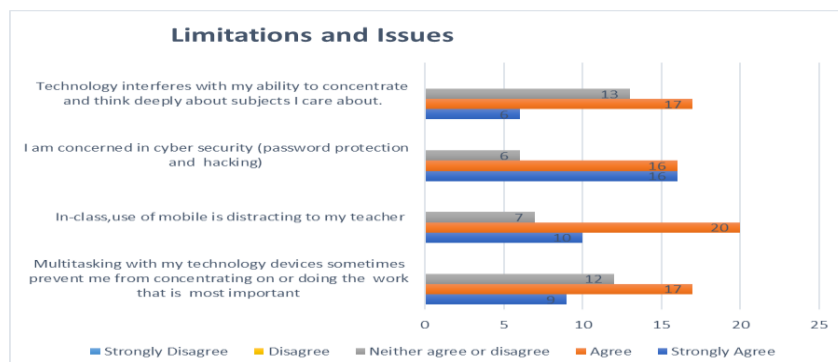


It is a reality that in educational institutions, ICTs have shifted traditional teaching and learning practices. Based on the responses gathered from LIS students, it is clear that with ICTs, they can better understand their subject matter and achieve improved results. Studies indicate that technology is only successful in the teaching-learning process if it is interactive, enjoyable, innovative, and allows students to express their creativity in completing performance tasks and other assessments, with guidance and support from the academic community, including both teachers and institutions.

Table 4.

### Issues and Limitations Encountered by LIS Students in the Use of ICTs

Results revealed that the majority of respondents agreed they encountered some issues and limitations in the use of ICTs, namely: technology interfered with their ability to think deeply and concentrate on the subjects they cared about, concerns about cybersecurity (such as password protection and hacking), distractions from mobile devices during lessons, and multitasking with technology that hindered their focus on important work.



### Implications for Theory and Practice

The implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) presents both benefits and drawbacks, even as it enhances our teaching and learning experiences. Nevertheless, we can bridge this divide by tackling the associated challenges and concerns with policies and practices that benefit both faculty and students. Consequently, the teaching and learning experience becomes more engaging, enjoyable, and interactive.

## Conclusion

LIS students at Higher Education Institutions in Iloilo City have access to and utilize ICTs at home and at school via their laptops and smartphones. They find ICTs extremely valuable for their learning process, as these tools help them gain a better understanding of the subject matter and achieve better results in their courses. Moreover, ICTs enable them to complete their academic requirements more conveniently, inspire them to explore topics they had not previously encountered, and facilitate easy collaboration with peers both on and off campus. Additionally, ICTs enhance their information technology and information management skills, foster a stronger connection with their teachers, and improve their long-term career and employment prospects. However, students also acknowledged some limitations and challenges associated with the use of ICTs, although the majority agree that these tools are useful for both students and faculty.

## Recommendations

1. The university should continue enhancing its ICT facilities to improve the teaching and learning experience.
2. Administrators need to develop policies and practices for the comprehensive integration of ICTs into the curriculum.
3. Teachers should fully leverage ICTs to foster creativity in education and boost productivity through collaborative learning.
4. Budget allocations must include provisions for ICT resources for both teachers and students, particularly for facilities accessible at the university.
5. Regular ICT training and other professional development should be provided for teachers to develop necessary skills to effectively integrate ICT into their teaching methods.
6. Students should develop proficiency in information, media, and digital literacy when using ICTs.

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# Level of Financial Literacy and Financial Management Practices Among Working College Students in a Higher Education Institution

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## ABSTRACT

Financial literacy is crucial for students to make informed financial decisions and effectively manage their finances. This quantitative study investigates financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students in a Higher Educational Institution when grouped according to sex, age, year level, and living arrangements. This study employed a descriptive and correlational research design. It utilized pre-existing questionnaires validated through jury validation. The study employed Snowball sampling to collect data from 128 respondents personally. Researchers accurately analyzed the gathered data using descriptive statistics and non-inferential parametric tests. Results indicate significant differences in financial literacy according to sex and age but not by living arrangements and year level. Additionally, there are significant differences in financial management practices based on age but not by sex, year level, or living arrangements. Moreover, there is also a significant relationship between working college students' financial literacy and financial management practices. The study demonstrates that working college students effectively utilize financial knowledge in everyday financial management activities. By giving students financial knowledge and skills through apps, they can make wise money choices, leading to stable finances in the long run.

**Keywords:** Financial Literacy, Financial Management Practices, Working College Students, Age, Sex, Year Level, Living Arrangement

## Introduction

Financial literacy is the cornerstone of personal finance skills, encompassing the ability to efficiently earn, spend, invest, save, budget, and borrow. This essential knowledge empowers individuals to make informed financial decisions, enhancing financial stability and overall well-being (Team, 2023). On the other hand, financial management involves setting up a budget and planning how money will be saved or spent (Corporation, 2021). For young adults, particularly college students, building a solid foundation in personal finance knowledge is necessary and a gateway to a brighter financial future (Azer & Mohamad, 2018).

College students frequently make financial decisions related to necessities such as food, rent, clothing, transportation, gadgets, entertainment, and alcohol, which impact their future financial management practices (Gumbo et al., 2022). Across ASEAN countries, diverse financial management practices, including responsible spending, debt management, and investing, help individuals avoid financial pitfalls. However, despite various efforts to promote financial stability, some people still struggle with long-term financial planning, notably retirement savings (Yakob et al., 2021).

A notable study by Villanueva (2021), referencing a 2015 World Bank survey, revealed that only 25% of Filipinos exhibited basic financial literacy, the lowest in the ASEAN region. Similarly, a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) survey highlighted that 1% of Filipino adults answered financial literacy questions correctly (Crismundo, 2023). Another study pointed out that while senior high school students demonstrated some awareness of savings, their overall financial skills were lacking, emphasizing the critical role of financial literacy as students transition into adulthood (Common, 2022).

The issue is particularly prevalent among working students who face unique financial challenges, including balancing work with academic responsibilities and managing limited income (Munchin, 2023). Moreover, the BSP noted a decline in the percentage of adult savers in the Philippines, particularly among younger

demographics (Daily Tribune, 2022). Studies consistently show that most Filipinos need more vital financial literacy and management skills (BusinessMirror, 2022).

This study aims to explore the level of financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students at a Higher Educational Institution. The research will collect and analyze data using structured survey questions, considering variables such as sex, age, year level, and living arrangements. The results will contribute to developing a budgeting app to improve working college students' financial literacy and management practices, ultimately guiding them toward better financial decisions and long-term financial stability.

## Methods

This study employs quantitative research to examine financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students in a higher educational institution. Quantitative research involves a methodical examination of phenomena through the collection of numerical data, analyzed using computational, mathematical, or statistical methods (Fleetwood, 2023). For this study, a descriptive and correlational research design will be used, allowing researchers to assess the current levels of financial literacy and financial management practices among the target population.

The respondents of this study were working college students from Bacolod City who were employed either part-time or full-time while studying at a higher educational institution, who received a salary or income, and who were part-time or full-time employees in an establishment outside of the institution. The research respondents will share their knowledge by rating their level of financial literacy and financial management practices based on the questions provided. A sample size of at least 128 students was selected using snowball sampling, a technique appropriate for identifying participants that may be difficult to locate (Simkus, 2023). Thus, Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling approach in which the existing ones select individuals to become a part of the sample. Existing individuals were invited to recommend individuals they know to ensure the sample expands as a snowball. Snowball sampling was utilized since it is used when respondents need help identifying or locating (Simkus, 2023).

The research instruments will consist of questionnaires adapted from previous financial literacy and management studies, including Likert scale questions. Pre-existing, validated questionnaires save time and resources and can be tailored to the specific objectives of a study (Caduff & Ranganathan, 2023).

The questionnaire for this study consists of demographics, financial literacy, and financial management practices. Financial literacy questions are adapted from Agunday et al. (2022), while financial management practice questions are adapted from Lumibao and Santos-Recto (2022). The instrument has undergone validation using criteria established by Good and Scates, receiving an excellent validity score of 4.38. A reliability score of 0.89, determined through Cronbach's alpha, indicates that the instrument is reliable and interpreted as good. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha was used to verify the internal consistency of the measurements.

The researchers followed the procedures orderly: Submit a request letter, search for and adapt questionnaires, modify questionnaires, contact original authors for permission, validate by Jurors, conduct validity and reliability tests, distribute questionnaires (Snowball Sampling), obtain informed consent, tabulate and analyze data, formulate conclusions and recommendations. Then, the data gathering process involved securing permission from the academic administration of the Higher Educational Institution to survey college students. The researchers adapted pre-existing survey instruments from scholarly publications, aligning them with the study's aims. After obtaining permission from the original authors and validating the questionnaire, the survey was distributed personally to participants, and the survey responses were gathered using Snowball Sampling last February 14, 2024, with 18 initial respondents. On February 15, the number of respondents increased to 38. Subsequently, on February 16, there were 24 respondents,

followed by one on February 17 and February 18. However, on February 19, 38 more respondents were added. The survey continued with six respondents on February 20 and concluded with two respondents on February 21. Overall, the study was able to gather a total of 128 respondents. Ethical considerations were followed throughout the research process, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and proper disposal of data post-study.

The study's analysis includes descriptive statistics to measure the overall level of financial literacy and management practices among the respondents and comparative and correlational analyses to explore differences and relationships based on variables such as sex, age, year level, and living arrangements. Descriptive analysis using mean and standard deviation and inferential non-parametric tests such as Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis, and Spearman Correlation will be employed.

Ethical principles such as competence, integrity, responsibility, and respect for participants' rights guide the research process. Informed consent will be obtained from participants, with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity regarding the data collected. The research also adheres to social responsibility, ensuring that findings contribute to ethical practices and societal well-being.

## Results and Discussions

**Table 4.**

*Demographic table of respondents*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>n</b>
<b>Sex</b>	
Male	46
Female	82
<b>Age</b>	
Younger	75
Older	53
<b>Living Arrangements</b>	
Living Dependently	92
Living Independently	36
<b>Year Level</b>	
1st Year	47
2nd Year	43
3rd Year	15
4th Year	23
<b>As a whole</b>	<b>128</b>

The table shows the demographic data of working college students at a higher educational institution. Based on the statistics shown above, there are 128 respondents, 46 of whom are male and 82 of whom are female. There are 75 students under the age of 18 to 21 and 53 students beyond the age of 21 to 27. Furthermore, 92 respondents live independently, and 36 students live independently. Lastly, 47 respondents are first-year students, 43 are second-year students, 15 are third-year students, and 23 are fourth-year students.



**Table 5.**  
*Level of financial literacy among working college students when taken as a whole and when they are grouped according to sex, age, year level, and living arrangements.*

Variables	n	M	SD	Interpretation
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	46	4.05	0.64	High
Female	82	4.31	0.51	High
<b>Age</b>				
Younger	75	4.14	0.56	High
Older	53	4.33	0.58	High
<b>Living Arrangements</b>				
Living Dependently	92	4.24	0.54	High
Living Independently	36	4.17	0.66	High
<b>Year Level</b>				
1st Year	47	4.18	0.61	High
2nd Year	43	4.21	0.47	High
3rd Year	15	4.37	0.52	High
4th Year	23	4.22	0.72	High
<b>As a whole</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>4.22</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 5 shows the level of financial literacy among working college students when taken as a whole and when grouped according to sex, age, year level, and living arrangements. Based on the data presented in the given table, the level of financial literacy among working college students based on their sex is high, with a mean score of 4.05 for males and 4.31 for females. Moreover, based on their age, younger students have a mean score of 4.14, while older students have a mean score of 4.33, indicating that both younger and older students have a high level of financial literacy.

Younger students (mean score: 4.14) and older students (mean score: 4.33) exhibit high financial literacy. Studies have shown that financial socialization extends beyond childhood and continues through adulthood. Older students likely have more experience managing finances through work or independent living, contributing to their higher literacy. Younger students benefit from early exposure to financial concepts through family and formal education.

Research highlights that male and female college students can display high levels of financial literacy, but gender differences may exist. For example, a study by Chen and Volpe found that females often demonstrate higher caution in financial decision-making but report less confidence in their financial knowledge than males. This could help explain the higher mean financial literacy scores among females (4.31) compared to males (4.05) in your data, aligning with the idea that females may develop more robust financial behaviors due to different socialization processes.

A high financial literacy score is linked to gender, educational background, working experience, monthly income, number of credit cards, and mother's education (Widyastuti et al., 2020). Silva (2021) further stated that according to the financial literacy equation, the female had an average of 1.916, slightly higher than the male average of 1.812. Wilson (2021), as cited in Loewenstein et al. (2019), added that older adults make normatively correct sequence preferences for choices to receive money than younger ones. Furthermore, a study by Dewi (2022) also concluded that different ages significantly influence the relationship between achieving goals and making decisions. The financial capability of the millennial generation strengthens their financial goals and helps them make proper financial decisions. Moreover, another study also concluded that year-level or higher educational attainment directly affects students' financial literacy levels. Among these factors, education was found to have the most significant influence on the financial knowledge of university students. Prior research has also emphasized the significance of education in shaping young individuals' financial knowledge and behavior. It follows that prioritizing education is essential for enhancing understanding of any subject matter, including financial literacy (Albeerdy & Gharlegghi, 2018). Regarding living arrangements, parental involvement influences financial literacy significantly (Jayaraman & Jambunathan, 2018).

**Table 6.**

*Level of financial management practices among working college students when taken as a whole and when they are grouped according to sex, age, year level, and living arrangements.*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	46	3.62	0.55	High
Female	82	3.47	0.69	Moderate
<b>Age</b>				
Younger	75	3.41	0.71	Moderate
Older	53	3.69	0.49	High
<b>Living Arrangements</b>				
Living Dependently	92	3.55	0.59	High
Living Independently	36	3.48	0.77	Moderate
<b>Year Level</b>				
1st Year	47	3.52	0.64	High
2nd Year	43	3.50	0.71	High
3rd Year	15	3.50	0.57	High
4th Year	23	3.60	0.59	High
<b>As a whole</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 6 shows the level of financial management practices among working college students when grouped according to sex, age, year level, and living arrangements. Based on the given data above, the level of financial management practices among working college students based on sex is high for males and moderate for females, with a mean score of 3.62 for males and 3.47 for females, indicating that males have a higher financial management practice than females. Moreover, older students have a mean score of 3.69 based on age. In comparison, younger students have a mean score of 3.41, indicating that older students have higher financial management practices than younger students.

Kwenda and Sihlongonyane (2021) found that the mean score differences in the students' financial management practices and their gender, type of school, and faculty were statistically significant. A study conducted in Malaysia found that male youths are better informed about financial management and money matters than females (Sabri & Po, 2018). Similarly, a study claimed that younger and older people have different financial management behaviors (Delmo et al., 2023, as cited in Jorgensen et al., 2017). Moreover, the study by Winder (2018) declared regarding the year level that the academic environment significantly impacts students' lives, particularly in their financial management, because education is meant to be their main priority during these years. It was concluded that the student's level in school consistently takes on similar effective management practices in some aspects. However, older educational levels likewise obtained a higher level than their younger counterparts. In terms of living arrangements, a study suggests that how students live their lives, or their lifestyle choices, significantly influences how they manage their finances. In this case, the living arrangement of a student is directly correlated to their financial management, whether their parents support them or are living independently while studying (Novitasari et al., 2021).

Lastly, the data showing high financial literacy across all year levels (1st to 4th year) mirrors findings that financial knowledge tends to increase with education and experience. Participation in seminars and workshops and increasing financial responsibilities as students progress through college contribute to this growth. Thus, the consistency in scores across different year levels (ranging from 3.50 to 3.60) suggests that students tend to develop better financial management skills. This development can be increased due to exposure to financial responsibilities and potential employment opportunities for practical financial experiences.

**Table 7.**

*Significant difference in the level of financial literacy among working college students when they are grouped according to sex, age, and living arrangements.*

Variable	n	Mean Rank	U	z	p
<b>Sex</b>					
Male	46	53.74	1391.000	-2.465	0.014
Female	82	70.54			
<b>Age</b>					
Younger	75	57.99	1499.000	-2.369	0.018
Older	53	73.72			
<b>Living Arrangements</b>					
Living Dependently	92	65.39	1574.500	-0.433	0.665
Living Independently	36	62.24			

Note: the difference is significant when  $p < 0.05$

Mann Whitney was used to determine the significant difference in financial literacy among working college students when grouped according to sex, age, and living arrangements. Based on the results of Table 7, it is evident that there was a significant difference in financial literacy among college working students when grouped according to sex ( $p=0.014$ ) and age ( $p=0.018$ ). However, there was no significant difference when grouped according to living arrangement ( $p=0.665$ ). Female students tend to have a higher financial literacy than males, with a mean rank of 70.54 and 53.74, respectively. As for age, older students are perceived to have greater financial literacy than younger students, with a mean rank of 73.72 and 57.99, respectively. As for living arrangements, students who live independently and dependently have similar mean ranks of 62.24 and 65.39, respectively. Furthermore, Table 7's results reject H1 regarding age and sex and accept it regarding living arrangements.

Table 7's results, when based on sex, contradict previous studies. Notably, studies by Hasler and Lusardi (2018), Philippas and Avdoulas (2020), and Bucher-Koenen (2018) all conclude that women generally exhibit lower levels of financial literacy compared to men. They tend to answer fewer financial literacy questions correctly and are more inclined to express uncertainty about their answers. However, based on the study of Mokhtar (2018), the results on this table are correlated, as the mean score of women is slightly higher than that of men, suggesting that women are more literate than men. Moreover, regarding age, previous literature agrees with this study's findings. A study by Wilson (2021) showed that the older population tends to exhibit higher financial literacy than their younger counterparts. Furthermore, based on living arrangements, the study of Gunawan & Chairani (2019) supports these results, as previous literature concluded that students who board tend to have poor financial literacy because of their lifestyle. Moreover, Liu & Hua (2021) also stated that a heavier financial burden causes students living independently to have lower literacy levels.

Finally, the distinction between dependent and independent living arrangements shows that both groups score highly (4.24 and 4.17, respectively). Independent students often develop financial skills through managing living expenses. In contrast, dependent students may rely more on guidance from family members but still exhibit vital financial behaviors through other socialization agents.

**Table 8.**  
*Significant difference in the level of financial literacy among working college students when they are grouped according to year level.*

Year Level	n	Mean Rank	$\chi^2$	df	p
1st Year	47	62.81	1.925	3	0.588
2nd Year	43	60.91			
3rd Year	15	75.17			
4th Year	23	67.72			

Note: the difference is significant when  $p < 0.05$

As for Table 8, Kruskal Wallis was used to determine the significant difference in financial literacy among working college students when grouped according to year level. It is shown that there was no significant difference among the year levels ( $p=0.588$ ) in terms of their financial literacy, with all levels having a similar mean rank. Specifically, 1st Year students have a mean rank of 62.81, 2nd Year 60.91, 3rd Year 75.17, and 4th Year 67.72. However, the mean rank of 3rd-year students is higher than that of the other year levels. In contrast, 2nd-year students have the lowest mean rank among all. Additionally, table 8's results accept the H1 of this study.

As for the year level, studies can be indirectly connected to the table's results, showing that 3rd-year and 4th-year students are more literate than 1st-year and 2nd-year students. Albeerdy & Gharleghi (2018) and Brau et al. (2019) concluded that educational level shifts students' financial knowledge, suggesting that their literacy also matures as they reach a higher level. These changes are associated with learning activities within the university.

**Table 9.**  
*Significant difference in the level of financial management practices among working college students when they are grouped according to sex, age, and living arrangements.*

Variable	n	Mean Rank	U	z	p
<b>Sex</b>					
Male	46	69.696	1647.000	-1.187	0.235
Female	82	61.585			
<b>Age</b>					
Younger	75	58.240	1518.000	-2.273	0.023
Older	53	73.358			
<b>Living Arrangements</b>					
Living Dependently	92	65.21	1590.500	-0.347	0.728
Living Independently	36	62.68			

Note: the difference is significant when  $p < 0.05$

Mann Whitney determined the significant difference in financial management practices among working college students when grouped according to sex, age, year level, and living arrangements. According to the results of Table 9, there was a significant difference in financial management practices among working college students based on age ( $p=0.023$ ). Older students are perceived to have higher financial management practices than younger students, with a mean rank of 73.358 and 58.240, respectively. However, there was no significant difference in financial management practices among working college students based on sex ( $p=0.235$ ) and living arrangements ( $p=0.728$ ). Both females and males have a similar mean ranks of 69.696 and 61.585, and both students who live independently and dependently have similar mean ranks of 65.21 and 62.89, respectively. Table 9's results accept the H2 of the study in terms of age but reject it in terms of sex and living arrangements.

When grouped according to sex, the studies of Al-Bahrani et al. (2020), Lind et al. (2020), and Sabri & Po (2018) agree with the results of this table. Previous literature concluded that men practice better financial management than women since men show better financial behavior, which leads to better financial well-being. When grouped according to age, Eberhardt et al. (2018) and Kwenda & Sihlongonyane (2021) also support the results of Table 9 since the literature shows that maturity is highly associated with financial management. This indicates that older people practice better financial management than their peers. When based on a living arrangement, the study of Novitasari et al. (2021) supports the results of Table 9 since the lifestyle of working college students directly affects their financial management; in this case, those who are supported by their parents (living dependently) tend to have higher financial management than those who live alone as Financial Socialization Theory explains how individuals develop financial knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors through various socialization agents such as parents, peers, education, and work experience. These factors shape their financial literacy throughout their lives. Studies suggest that working college students, influenced by familial and external financial socialization, tend to exhibit varying levels of financial literacy based on demographics like sex, age, year level, and living arrangements.

**Table 10.**

*Significant difference in the level of financial management practices among working college students when they are grouped according to year level.*

Year Level	n	Mean Rank	$\chi^2$	df	p
1st Year	47	64.28	0.851	3	0.837
2nd Year	43	63.91			
3rd Year	15	58.73			
4th Year	23	69.83			

Note: the difference is significant when  $p < 0.05$

Moreover, when grouped according to year level, Kruskal Wallis was used to determine the significant difference in financial management practices among working college students. Table 10 shows no significant difference in financial management practices among working college students when grouped according to year level ( $p = 0.837$ ). Notably, 1st Year students have a mean rank of 64.28, 2nd Year 63.91, 3rd Year 58.73, and 4th Year 69.83. However, the mean rank of 4th-year students is higher than that of the other year levels. In contrast, 3rd year students have the lowest mean rank among all. Furthermore, table 10 accepts the study's H2.

A study by Winder (2018) somehow correlated with the results accumulated in the table, that the 4th year students are higher in financial management practices than those with lower educational levels. The study further stated that the academic environment significantly impacts students' lives, particularly in their financial management, because education is meant to be their main priority during these years. Furthermore, the study concluded that the student's level in school consistently takes on similar effective management practices in some aspects. However, older educational levels likewise obtained a higher level than their younger counterparts.

**Table 11.**

*Significant relationship between the level of financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students.*

Variable	r	df	p
Financial Literacy x Financial Management Practices	0.345	126	0.000

Table 11 shows the relationship between financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students. There was a significant relationship between financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students ( $p = 0.000$ ). There was a low positive correlation between the level of financial literacy and financial management practices ( $r = 0.345$ ). The Spearman

correlation was used to determine the relationship between financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students. Furthermore, Table 11's results accept the study's H3.

Dewi et al. (2020) stated that regarding financial attitude, financial skills, and financial behavior, the proportions of respondents in the fair category were 70.6%, 66.5%, and 72.2%, respectively. Financial attitude and financial management behavior were significantly correlated, as were financial skills and financial management behavior. However, the association between financial behavior and knowledge was not statistically significant. Furthermore, according to a partially significant test, The other independent variable, financial management learning (X2), significantly affected Generation Z (Y) personal finance management. At the same time, no significant effect was found on financial literacy (X1), financial attitude (X3), and family financial education (X4) variables (Bado et al., 2023).

Examining this association in more detail reveals that students who are more financially literate also typically demonstrate more responsible financial actions. Effective budgeting, wise financial decision-making, and responsible debt management are a few examples of these practices. On the other hand, pupils with weaker financial literacy levels could find it challenging to handle their money, resulting in problems, including excessive spending, debt accumulation, and insufficient savings.

The quantitative analysis of survey results revealed insightful findings regarding working college students' financial literacy and management practices. The data indicated that working students exhibit a high level of financial literacy, demonstrating their strong understanding and application of financial concepts. There was no significant difference in the level of financial literacy when students were grouped by year level or living arrangements, suggesting that these factors do not influence financial literacy among working students. However, significant differences were observed when students were grouped by sex and age, highlighting a variation in financial literacy based on these demographics.

Similarly, the analysis revealed that working college students display a high level of financial management practices, indicating effective handling of finances such as budgeting and saving. No significant difference was found in financial management practices based on sex, year level, or living arrangements. However, age was found to be a determining factor, with older students demonstrating more refined financial management practices. Additionally, a significant positive relationship was identified between financial literacy and financial management practices, suggesting that higher financial literacy contributes to better financial management.

These findings underscore the positive impact that work experiences have on college students' financial literacy and management skills. The ability to earn and manage income provides these students with practical opportunities to apply their financial knowledge, enhancing their capabilities in personal finance. This study suggests that working students gain valuable financial competencies that may contribute to their financial well-being and, more broadly, to the country's socioeconomic activities.

For professionals and future researchers, the results highlight the need for more in-depth investigations into the factors influencing financial literacy and management practices among working college students. Such research is crucial for developing strategies to support students in their financial education and, ultimately, their financial security. This study opens the door to a more comprehensive understanding of financial literacy and management, providing deeper insights that could be applied to educational programs designed to equip students with critical financial skills.

In summary, the high level of financial literacy across these groups reflects the impact of both formal education and practical experience, as shaped by different socialization factors throughout the students' lives.

## Conclusions

The study highlights that working college students generally exhibit high financial literacy and financial management practices. These findings suggest that the students understand financial concepts relevant to their income levels, effectively applying this knowledge in their daily lives. Consistent with previous research by Siegfried and Wuttke (2021), factors such as gender, educational background, and the ability to delay gratification are significant determinants of financial literacy. Likewise, Mwangi's research (2023) affirms that sex, high school education, and the field of study substantially influence students' financial behaviors.

Interestingly, the research reveals that female students and older individuals demonstrate higher levels of financial literacy than their male and younger counterparts. This trend suggests that financial literacy is closely associated with gender, age, and work experience. However, the student's year level and living arrangements do not appear to have a notable impact on their financial literacy, aligning with Sharma's (2022) findings that demographic factors like gender and educational background are more influential than academic standing. These observations underscore the complex and multifaceted nature of financial literacy among college students and suggest the need for targeted educational interventions.

Regarding financial management practices, the study found that demographic variables such as sex, year level, and living arrangements exert minimal influence on how students manage their finances. Contrary to expectations, these factors do not significantly shape students' financial decision-making or habits. However, age remains a critical factor, with older students generally displaying more responsible financial behaviors, suggesting maturity and life experience play a crucial role in financial management.

A notable finding from this study is the strong positive correlation between financial literacy and financial management practices among working college students. This correlation is supported by the work of Lusardi and Messy (2023), who emphasize the importance of financial literacy in enabling individuals to make informed financial decisions, manage savings, understand insurance, and effectively use financial instruments. Thus, the study affirms that working college students benefit from engaging in both financial literacy and management, which helps them successfully navigate the demands of academic life and employment.

However, this study faces several limitations, including its small sample size and focus on a specific geographic location (Bacolod City), which restricts the generalizability of the findings to a broader population of working college students. Additionally, the exclusion of specific student groups, such as student assistants, and the reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases or limit the comprehensiveness of the data on financial literacy and management practices. These constraints may prevent a holistic understanding of financial behaviors among students in varying circumstances. Future research could expand the geographic scope to include a more extensive and diverse sample of working students from different regions and institutions to address these limitations. Incorporating student assistants and gig economy workers into the respondent pool would provide more varied insights. Additionally, using objective measures of financial behavior, such as actual spending or savings data, would improve the accuracy and reliability of the findings. This would enable more generalizable and actionable conclusions on working students' financial literacy and practices.

In conclusion, the study underscores the positive outcomes associated with working college students who demonstrate proficiency in financial literacy and practice sound financial management. These findings emphasize the importance of continued research into the financial behaviors of working students to inform better financial education programs aimed at fostering financial stability and well-being among this population.

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# Coping Levels and Teaching Performance of Faculty

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## ABSTRACT

Understanding how well university faculty are coping and performing their duties is crucial for achieving sustainable quality in education. This study employed the Occupational Stress Inventory-Revised (OSI-R) by Osipow, adopting 45 items from its questionnaire on Occupational Roles, Personal Strain, and Personal Resources, along with the Individual Performance Commitment Rating for the past three years of seventy-five (75) university faculty. The study used a descriptive-correlational research design to ascertain the faculty's coping and teaching performance levels. Results indicated that while personal strain had a low overall mean, faculty respondents exhibited high coping levels in personal resources and occupational duties. Specific coping mechanisms identified included strong social support networks, proactive problem-solving, and effective time management, which bolstered their occupational roles and personal resources. However, these mechanisms appeared insufficient for mitigating personal strain, likely due to individual challenges. The study found no correlation between the faculty respondents' coping strategies and their teaching effectiveness, suggesting that other factors might influence teaching performance. In conclusion, educational institutions must foster a supportive environment accommodating this diversity despite variations in coping mechanisms among faculty and their lack of correlation with teaching efficacy. This strategy will help maintain high standards of instruction and ensure educators can effectively manage professional challenges. The findings are useful for developing targeted interventions to support faculty well-being and enhance teaching performance, ultimately contributing to sustainable educational quality.

**Keywords:** Occupational roles; Personal strain; Personal resources, Individual performance commitment rating

## Introduction

Teaching is often regarded as the noblest profession, requiring licensed professionals who possess the skills, passion, and dedication necessary for the role. This career demands continuous learning and development, as mandated by Republic Act No. 10912, which requires teachers in the Philippines to regularly update their knowledge and skills to renew their Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) licenses. However, significant challenges have emerged, discouraging many from entering the field.

Recent reports from the Department of Education (DepEd) indicate alarming trends, including increasing suicide rates among teachers, with heavy workloads cited as a contributing factor (Mateo, 2018). In response, DepEd Undersecretary Sevilla has called for an investigation into these incidents to identify their root causes. The exploration of coping levels and teaching performance among faculty is enriched by several key studies that highlight the psychological challenges teachers face and their coping mechanisms.

Hidalgo-Andrade et al. (2021) assessed the psychological distress, life satisfaction, and perceived stress of Ecuadorian teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic through a web-based cross-sectional survey involving 394 teachers. They found that caregiving responsibilities significantly correlated with higher psychological distress and perceived stress, particularly among female teachers. The study identified coping strategies such as seeking social support and engaging in leisure activities, underscoring the importance of mental health support for educators.

Similarly, Rabago-Mingoa (2017) investigated stress levels and coping strategies among 100 teachers in Metro Manila, utilizing questionnaires analyzed through descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The study revealed common stressors affecting teacher-student relationships and performance, while also

providing recommendations for stress management techniques that could enhance teaching effectiveness and this aligns with the need for targeted interventions in the current research.

Candeias et al. (2021) further emphasized the impact of stress and burnout, analyzing over 7,500 teachers in inclusive schools. Their findings indicated that non-specialist teachers experienced higher burnout levels related to stress vulnerabilities such as perfectionism and lack of social support which highlights the critical need for supportive systems to address teacher stress, a theme echoed in the present study.

In a study conducted by Prasad et al. (2016), they explored the causes of occupational stress and coping strategies among 300 CBSE-affiliated teachers in Hyderabad, revealing significant stress factors and chronic health issues linked to teaching. Their insights into the relationship between stress and performance underscore the necessity of understanding coping mechanisms, which is a primary focus of this research.

Moreover, Greenberg et al. (2016) highlighted the high-stress levels in the U.S. teaching profession, which negatively impacted teacher health, job satisfaction, and student achievement. Their findings on the importance of supportive school environments resonate with the current study's objective to explore coping strategies as a means to enhance teaching performance.

On the other hand, Jain (2021) utilized interpretative phenomenological analysis to examine primary school teachers' experiences of work stress in New Zealand, identifying emotional demands and workload as significant stressors. The study's focus on healthy coping mechanisms adds depth to the understanding of how faculty can manage stress while maintaining their commitment to teaching.

Lastly, Rajesh et al. (2022) identified coping strategies among high school teachers in Southern India, using the Brief COPE Inventory to assess their effectiveness. Their findings indicate that common strategies, such as planning and positive reframing, are crucial for teacher well-being. This aligns with the current study's aim to investigate how faculty coping levels can influence teaching performance, ultimately contributing to sustainable quality assurance in education. Together, these studies provide a robust foundation for examining the interplay between coping mechanisms and teaching effectiveness, reinforcing the necessity of targeted interventions to support faculty well-being.

In this context, tools like the *Occupational Survey Inventory-Revised* (OSI-R) developed by Osipow (1998) provide valuable insights into the specific stressors faced by teachers and inform targeted interventions. The OSI-R is a comprehensive instrument that measures personal strain, occupational roles, and personal resources in the workplace. Its scales effectively assess outcomes and establish the effectiveness of various individual and organizational interventions aimed at reducing stress and strain, with research supporting its efficacy in measuring treatment outcomes (Higgins, 1986; Smith, 1987).

Additionally, the use of *Individual Performance Commitment Ratings* (IPCR) over the past three years has enabled the identification of trends and correlations between coping levels and teaching performance. The IPCR serves multiple purposes: it quantifies how well faculty perform their teaching and responsibilities and highlights the impact of their coping strategies on job performance. By correlating performance ratings with coping levels, institutions can identify faculty who may need additional support or resources to enhance their coping mechanisms and overall performance. It also provide constructive feedback, allowing faculty to recognize areas for growth and evaluate their coping strategies in managing challenges.

Analyzing the relationship between coping levels and performance ratings can reveal patterns that clarify how different coping mechanisms influence teaching effectiveness. These insights can inform tailored professional development programs aimed at strengthening coping strategies, ultimately improving both faculty well-being and instructional quality. Moreover, performance ratings encourage faculty to reflect on

their coping strategies and overall effectiveness, fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

Furthermore, the application of Bandura's *Self-Efficacy Theory* is also crucial in this context, as it emphasizes the belief in one's ability to manage challenges effectively. According to this theory, individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to adopt proactive coping strategies when facing stressors and this study tried to investigate the relationship between university faculty's self-efficacy beliefs and their coping responses to occupational stressors, positing that higher self-efficacy is associated with improved performance outcomes. By understanding these dynamics, the study highlights the importance of fostering self-efficacy among faculty members to enhance their coping capabilities and overall effectiveness.

Several key studies previously discussed have highlighted the psychological challenges faced by teachers and their coping mechanisms, providing valuable context for exploring the relationship between coping levels and teaching performance among faculty. Given the significance of these challenges, understanding and addressing occupational stress and coping strategies is crucial in the field of education. This study aims to investigate how faculty members' coping levels influence their teaching performance, offering insights into effective stress management within an academic setting.

In addition, this research seeks to address a significant gap in the existing literature by examining the relationship between coping levels and teaching performance specifically within the academic environment of university faculty which may contribute new knowledge that can enhance sustainability in educational quality assurance, ultimately supporting faculty well-being and improving educational outcomes. This study specifically addressed the following sub-problems:

1. What is the faculty respondents' coping level concerning occupational roles, personal strain, and personal resources; and
2. Is there a significant relationship between the faculty respondents' coping level and performance in teaching?

## **Methodology and Framework of the Study**

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to explore the relationship between faculty coping levels and teaching performance. The descriptive-correlational method was chosen as it allows for the examination of relationships between variables without establishing causality, which is particularly useful for understanding the current state of events or subjects (Padua, 2006). Through this approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how faculty members' coping levels are related to their teaching performance.

To gather data on teaching performance, the study utilized the Individual Performance Commitment Rating Forms (IPCRF) from the past three years, with access to these records granted by the university's Human Resource Management Office, after securing approval from the Data Privacy Office. Faculty coping levels were assessed using 45 carefully selected items from the Occupational Stress Inventory-Revised (OSI-R) developed by Osipow. These items were chosen based on their relevance to the faculty's specific tasks and underwent expert face validation to ensure accuracy in measuring the respondents' coping mechanisms across various dimensions.

The study is also grounded in Bandura's (1977) concept of *self-efficacy*, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to manage their functioning and the events that affect their lives. High self-efficacy, a key element of this study, offers numerous benefits such as resilience to stress, improved job performance, and enhanced educational outcomes. Faculty members with high self-efficacy are better equipped to handle work-related demands, leading to improved instructional quality, learning outcomes, and overall stress management. This concept serves as a foundation for understanding the relationship between coping levels

and teaching performance, as teachers who are more confident in their abilities are likely to manage stress more effectively, ultimately benefiting their performance in the classroom.

The conceptual model below depicts the interplay of variables of the faculty's coping levels and their teaching performance. The figure presents a circle and two frames; the circle represents the faculty-respondents, and the frames contain the aspects of coping in terms of *occupational roles*, *personal strain*, and *personal resources*, as well as aspects of the teaching performance concerning *strategic functions*, *core functions*, and *support functions*, while the line connecting the two frames represents the significant relationship that may exist among the variables.

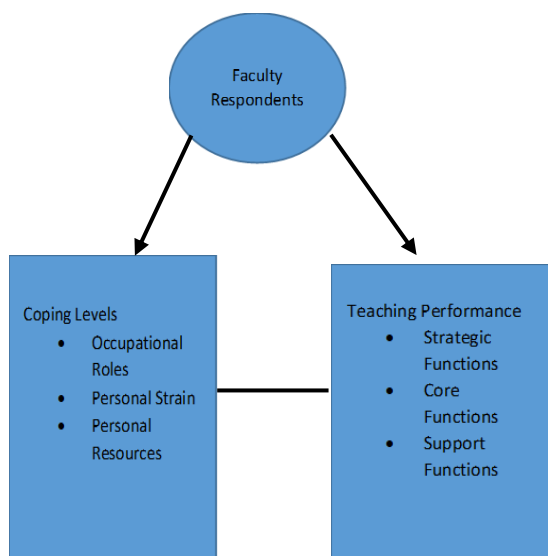


Figure 1: A conceptual paradigm depicting the relationship between faculty-respondents coping levels and teaching performance

## Results and Discussion

The following tables reflect the findings of the study on the coping levels and teaching performance of faculty concerning their *Occupational Roles*, *Personal Strain*, and *Personal Resources*.

Table 1: Coping Level of the Respondents in terms of Occupational Roles

Occupational Roles	Mean	Coping Level
I am expected to do many different tasks in too little time.	3.49	High
I am expected to perform tasks on my job for which I have never been trained.	2.90	Moderate
I have to take work home with me.	3.81	High
I have the resources I need to get my job done.	3.74	High
I wish that I had more help to deal with the demands placed upon me at work.	3.50	High
I know the basis on which I am evaluated.	3.88	High
I can satisfy my needs for success and recognition in my job.	3.85	High
The priorities of my job are clear to me.	4.36	Very high
I am required to make important decisions in my job.	4.28	Very high
I understand what is acceptable behavior on my job (e.g., dress, interpersonal relations, etc...)	4.51	Very high
I feel good about the work I do.	4.35	Very high

I deal with more people during the day than I prefer.	3.81	High
I spend more time concerned with the problems others at work bring to me.	3.07	Moderate
I worry about whether the people who work with me will get things done properly.	3.07	Moderate
I worry about meeting my job responsibilities.	3.27	Moderate
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.73</b>	<b>High</b>

The overall mean score for *occupational roles* is 3.73, indicating that faculty respondents perceive their coping levels as "high." This suggests they are managing their duties effectively, demonstrating resilience and a strong sense of well-being. However, the presence of items with lower mean scores, categorized as "moderate," refers to specific challenges in their roles that may not be adequately addressed. While faculty generally cope well, these moderate scores indicate that certain aspects of their responsibilities may still contribute to work-related stress, highlighting areas that require further attention and support.

Table 2: Coping Level of the Respondents in terms of Personal Strain

<b>Personal Strain</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Coping Level</b>
I am bored with my work.	1.76	Very low
I find my work interesting and/or exciting.	4.19	High
I make mistakes or errors in my work.	2.64	Moderate
I don't seem to be able to get much done at work.	2.59	Low
Lately, I have been depressed.	1.99	low
So many thoughts run through my head at night that I have trouble falling asleep.	2.37	Low
Lately, I respond badly in situations that normally wouldn't bother me.	2.12	Low
I find myself complaining about little things	2.07	Low
I have a good sense of humor.	3.71	High
I wish I had more time spent with close friends.	3.51	High
Lately, I am worried about how others at work view me.	2.51	Moderate
I often argue with friends.	1.99	Low
I have unplanned weight gain.	2.43	Moderate
I have trouble falling and staying asleep.	2.50	Low
I have aches and pains I could not explain.	2.47	Low
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>Low</b>

The findings reveal that the "*Personal Strain*" among faculty respondents received an overall mean score of 2.59, verbally interpreted as "*low*." Specifically, three items had high mean scores, eight items had low mean scores, and one item, "*I am bored with my work*," obtained a "*very low*" mean score of 1.76. This suggests that while faculty members generally manage stress effectively and do not frequently experience severe stress, anxiety, or burnout, there are areas where they may still struggle to mitigate stress effectively.

Table 3: Coping Level of the Respondents in terms of Personal Resources

<b>Personal Resources</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Coping Level</b>
When I need a vacation, I take one.	3.00	Moderate
I can do what I want to do in my free time.	3.60	High
I set aside time to do the things I enjoy.	3.49	High
When I am relaxing, I frequently think about work.	3.08	Moderate
I am careful with my diet (e.g., eating regularly, moderately, and with good nutrition in mind).	3.21	Moderate

I get a regular physical check-up.	2.79	Moderate
I practice deep breathing exercises for a few minutes several times a day.	2.86	Moderate
There is at least one person important to me who values me.	4.25	Very High
I feel I have at least one good friend I can count on.	4.29	Very High
I can put my job out of my mind when I go home.	3.22	High
I can establish priorities for the use of my time.	3.91	High
I can Identify important elements of problems I encounter.	4.06	High
I have techniques to help avoid being distracted.	3.87	High
When faced with the need to make a decision, I try to think through the consequences of my choices.	4.06	High
I try to keep important ways I behave and the things I do.	4.05	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.58</b>	<b>High</b>

As indicated in Table 3, the results suggest that respondents possess strong *personal resources* across various categories, as evidenced by the "high" overall mean score of 3.58. The data also indicates that respondents have strong social support, efficient stress management techniques, and well-developed time management, problem-solving, and decision-making skills which are crucial for overcoming obstacles, maintaining well-being, and achieving overall success in their professional and personal lives which is essential for effectively navigating the demands and stressors of their profession.

Table 4: Composite Table on the Coping Level of the Respondents

Aspects	Mean	Coping Level
Occupational Roles	3.73	High
Personal Strain	2.59	Low
Personal Resources	3.58	High
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>High</b>

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that faculty respondents generally exhibit high coping levels in their *occupational roles* and *personal resources*, as evidenced by the mean scores of 3.73 and 3.58, respectively. These high scores suggest that faculty feel equipped to handle their professional responsibilities and leverage their personal resources effectively.

In contrast, the mean score for personal strain is 2.59, categorized as "low." This finding implies that faculty experience minimal stress related to personal factors, which could be attributed to effective coping strategies, supportive work environments, or both.

Overall, the grand mean of 3.30 reflects a generally high coping level among respondents, reinforcing the notion that they are managing their professional demands well. However, the low score in personal strain indicates that while faculty may cope effectively, there could be underlying issues or stressors not fully addressed, warranting further exploration into their well-being and coping mechanisms.

This composite view of coping levels underscores the importance of fostering a supportive environment that not only maintains high coping levels in occupational roles and resources but also addresses any potential stressors that may arise in faculty's personal lives.

Table 5: Significant Relationship between the Faculty Respondents' Coping Level and Teaching Performance

Aspects	r	Sig	Ho	VI
Occupational Roles	.110	.351	FR	NS
Personal Strain	.036	.764	FR	NS
Personal Resources	.119	.312	FR	NS
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>.100</b>	<b>.397</b>	<b>FR</b>	<b>NS</b>

The results illustrate the relationship between faculty respondents' coping levels and their teaching performance across various aspects. The correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) for *occupational roles*, *personal strain*, and *personal resources* are all relatively low, with values of 0.110, 0.036, and 0.119, respectively. Additionally, the significance values (Sig) are well above the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating a lack of statistically significant relationships.

The findings suggest that coping levels in these areas do not have a meaningful impact on teaching performance. The failure to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) across all aspects, marked as "FR" (Fail to Reject), reinforces this conclusion.

This lack of significant correlation implies that other factors may play a more critical role in influencing teaching effectiveness, such as institutional support, pedagogical strategies, or student engagement. Consequently, it highlights the necessity for a more comprehensive exploration of the dynamics influencing teaching performance beyond coping levels.

These insights indicate that while faculty may exhibit high coping levels in their roles and resources, these do not necessarily translate into improved teaching performance, warranting further investigation into the multifaceted nature of effective teaching.

## Conclusion

Based on the results, faculty respondents exhibit high levels of coping in their occupational roles and personal resources, alongside low personal strain. This suggests they effectively manage stress and maintain positive overall well-being, enabling them to adapt to occupational demands. The supportive environments and personal resources available to them likely contribute significantly to this resilience.

However, the absence of a significant relationship between coping levels and teaching performance indicates that other factors may play a more critical role in influencing educational outcomes. This underscores the importance of understanding the complex nature of teaching effectiveness, including the potential impacts of institutional support, pedagogical practices, and student engagement.

To promote sustainable quality assurance in education, it is crucial to investigate these additional factors and develop comprehensive strategies that address both faculty well-being and teaching performance. By establishing a holistic support system that not only fosters personal coping mechanisms but also enhances teaching methodologies, institutions can create a more resilient and effective educational environment. Ultimately, this approach will benefit both faculty and students, enriching the broader educational community.

## Recommendation

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations can be made to promote sustainable quality assurance in education, despite the lack of a significant relationship between coping levels and teaching performance.

First, institutions should prioritize regular professional development training and workshops focused on effective teaching strategies. These initiatives can bolster faculty performance irrespective of their coping abilities. Additionally, creating a supportive work environment is essential; fostering a culture of mentorship and peer collaboration will empower faculty to share best practices and resources, thereby enhancing their overall effectiveness.

Furthermore, providing accessible mental health services and stress-relief programs can help faculty better manage personal strain, contributing to their overall well-being and indirectly improving their teaching. Establishing robust channels for constructive feedback is crucial for promoting continuous improvement and engagement among faculty members. Additionally, expanding performance evaluation criteria to

include factors such as student feedback and institutional support will facilitate a more comprehensive assessment of teaching effectiveness.

Finally, reviewing and adjusting faculty workloads is vital to ensure they remain manageable, allowing educators to focus on delivering high-quality education. By implementing these recommendations, institutions can create a sustainable framework for quality assurance that benefits both faculty and students, ultimately enhancing educational outcomes, regardless of the observed relationship between coping levels and teaching performance. This holistic approach will foster a healthier academic environment, ensuring that educators are equipped to meet the demands of their roles while promoting student success.

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# Breaking the Ice: Using Flipgrid to Enhance English Speaking Skills

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## ABSTRACT

Flipgrid provides an interactive platform for language learners, allowing students to practice speaking skills in a supportive environment (Miskam & Saidalvi, 2019). This study investigates the perceptions of Vietnamese EFL students regarding Flipgrid's effectiveness in developing their English-speaking skills. Using a pilot study, data were collected from 30 undergraduate students at a state university in the south of Vietnam through surveys, interviews, and video submissions. The findings reveal that Flipgrid significantly enhances learner engagement, confidence, and motivation, leading to improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and overall communication abilities, largely due to features like video recording and peer feedback. The platform's asynchronous nature also supports flexible learning, accommodating varying schedules and paces. These results highlight the potential of integrating technology into language learning, offering valuable insights for educators and policymakers aiming to enhance EFL instruction with innovative digital tools.

**Keywords:** Flipgrid, Speaking skill, English as a Foreign Language, Higher education, VSTEP

## Introduction

In early 2020, studies highlighted that many young graduates in Vietnam faced unemployment due to insufficient English skills, emphasizing a significant issue in language education (Welsh & Chang, 2020). In response, Vietnam's National Foreign Language Project 2020 aims to address the issue of unemployment among young graduates due to insufficient English skills. The project integrates the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) into the curriculum to improve language proficiency through student-centered learning (Sabudin, 2020). However, challenges in English proficiency, particularly speaking, persist. Flipgrid, an ICT platform for interactive learning via video responses, presents a promising solution. It helps alleviate psychological factors like anxiety by fostering a supportive environment. This research aims to explore primary students' attitudes towards using Flipgrid to enhance their English-speaking skills. Flipgrid promotes peer interaction, enhances communication (Fajardo-Guapisaca & Argudo-Garzón, 2022), improves discourse and pronunciation (Lim et al., 2021), and reduces anxiety related to English learning (Tuyet & Khang, 2020). However, research on its role in foreign language education remains limited (Hammet, 2021), particularly regarding Vietnamese students' attitudes towards acquiring English-speaking skills in VSTEP university classrooms. This study aims to introduce Flipgrid as an extracurricular activity for first-year engineering students in a General English course.

## Research Questions

- 1) *How does Flipgrid impact the students' real language confidence, critical engagement and strong motivation?*
- 2) *What are the advantages and disadvantages of using Flipgrid in their language learning process?*
- 3) *How do students feel about the implementation of Flipgrid?*

By addressing these questions, the research hopes to provide valuable insights into the role of digital tools in language education.

## **Literature Review**

English, as a global language in the era of globalization, has attracted significant attention from researchers who have explored its use across various contexts. With the rapid advancement of technology, numerous studies in the field of education have sought to understand the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) in both teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL). While the literature addresses a wide range of contexts, this review concentrates on four recurring themes: speaking skills, the impact of ICT tools on speaking skills, the use of Flipgrid, and previous studies. The theme regarding attitudes towards ICT tools in English learning is examined in the context of the technology acceptance model (TAM).

### ***Speaking skills***

People often ask, '*Can you speak English?*' but they rarely address writing skills or other linguistic abilities. Language learners often prioritize speaking as a key indicator of success in language acquisition, with it being considered the most essential skill among listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Ur, 2000). Speaking is considered a comprehensive command of a language, demonstrating an individual's communication abilities (Zaremba, 2006). Research by Brown and Lee (2015) identifies reading, listening, writing, and speaking as the primary skills determining EFL learners' proficiency. Proficiency in speaking reflects a learner's ability to communicate effectively across contexts, showcasing their comprehension and mastery of the language. However, challenges remain regarding students' English-speaking skills in the Vietnamese context.

### ***Challenges in Students' English Speaking Skills***

Vietnamese undergraduate students face challenges in developing effective English speaking skills, including limited exposure to the language, insufficient vocabulary, and limited practice opportunities (Dao, 2017; Quyen et al., 2018). These obstacles hinder students' proficiency and motivation, particularly in meeting B1 level standards as outlined by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The lack of a conducive learning environment, including limited exposure to native speakers and insufficient practice opportunities, remains a significant barrier (Nguyen, 2024). The primary objective of teaching speaking is to cultivate students' communicative competence, which includes building and sharing meaning through verbal and non-verbal symbols. Technology has transformed how speaking skills are developed and practiced, enhancing pronunciation, fluency, and overall oral performance (Sosas, 2021).

### ***Impact of Digital Tools on Speaking Skills***

Digital tools have significantly improved teaching and practice of speaking skills. Video-based discussion platforms like VoiceThread and EdConnect enable real-time conversations and immediate feedback, enhancing language fluency, accuracy, and complexity (Lowenthal & Moore, 2020). These platforms also extend learning beyond the classroom, fostering social interactions and reinforcing course content. Digital storytelling, which integrates voice, images, and music, helps students organize thoughts, pose questions, and communicate effectively, enhancing engagement and fostering a more nuanced understanding of language use and communication (Ohler, 2013).

### ***Flipgrid as a Tool for Enhancing Speaking Skills***

Flipgrid is a digital learning platform introduced by Professor Charles Miller in 2014 that enhances speaking practice by allowing teachers to create virtual communities through discussion prompts and short video recordings (Young, 2018). It fosters continuous peer interaction and collaborative learning, simulating real-life conversations. Features like content monitoring and editing allow students to develop their speaking skills at their own pace. Research shows that Flipgrid improves communication efficiency

through body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice (Petersenet et al., 2020; Lim et al., 2021; Huertas, 2021). Studies have shown improvements in speaking abilities and self-confidence among students using the platform (McLain, 2018). In Vietnam, it has reduced anxiety among EFL students and provided a low-stress environment for language practice (Tuyet and Khang, 2020).

### ***Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)***

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), first proposed by Davis (1989), is a theoretical framework that explains how students' attitudes towards ICT affect their use of e-Learning tools. It identifies two key factors: perceived ease of use (PEU) and perceived usefulness (PU). Research shows that PEU positively influences both attitudes and perceptions of PU, and that students are more likely to perceive MOOCs as valuable if they find them easy to use (Wu and Chen, 2017). However, its application to specific tools like Flipgrid has been limited. This study aims to explore EFL students' attitudes towards using Flipgrid in a Year 1 VSTEP classroom to learn English-speaking skills.

### ***Program Goals and Objectives***

As previously noted, the "Project 2020", formally referred to as the "National Foreign Language Project" (NFLP), aims to improve English-speaking skills among Vietnamese students at various educational levels. According to "Decision No. 1400/QĐ-TTg dated September 30, 2008", a primary goal is to ensure that by 2020, a significant proportion of Vietnamese students can confidently use English in communication, academic, and professional settings. However, Vietnamese test-takers have a lower average Speaking score compared to other Asian countries. Specifically, the average Speaking score was 14/30 in the TOEFL exam (ETS, 2022) and 5.8 in the IELTS exam (British Council, 2023). To address this, Flipgrid was introduced as a tool to facilitate speaking activities in the classroom with appropriate VSTEP levels.

## **Methods**

### ***Pedagogical Setting & Participants***

This study involved a pre-intermediate communication ability freshmen university class of 30 students. The class was comprised of students enrolled in an engineering program. These participants are considered to be today's 'Gen Z' and have grown up with easy access to digital resources. Students were therefore expected to own and use smartphones in class and outside of class for speaking tasks and exercises. A total of 30 students were invited to participate in the study. Out of them, 12 were studying B.Sc. in Aviation Technologies, while 7 were Air Transport and 11 were studying Air Traffic undergraduates at a state university in HCM City, Vietnam (Table 1).

Table 1: Breakdown of survey respondents by course

B.Sc. Aviation Technologies	12
B.Sc. Air Transport	07
B.Sc. Air Traffic	11
Total	<b>30</b>

### ***Methodology***

The methodology was developed to evaluate a small-scale project that required students to use Flipgrid to conduct speaking activities. Given (2016) defines, "*A pilot study is a small-scale phase of a larger project, which is designed to test the approaches that will be used in the final study*" (p. 112). This limited study aims to evaluate a technological application that can aid language learners in engaging with second language production for the initial time on such an application. If Flipgrid proves to be successful, it will be incorporated into a broader program that encompasses the creation of online language courses with spoken components. Before the beginning of the study, undergraduate students expressed a general interest

in the topic. A pilot test will be conducted to assess the viability and functionality of the research instrument in collecting the data. A cohort of 10 learners will be selected to participate in the pilot study, and seven of these learners will be interviewed, mirroring the target participants in the main research. The pilot study will be conducted to eradicate any potential misperceptions or errors on the part of the participants, and to enable the researcher to make any necessary modifications to the research instruments. After the data have been analyzed, some items from the questionnaire and semi-structured interview will be revised and refined if necessary. Since the respondents were anonymous, they were given a pseudonym.

### ***Scoring Rubrics***

The study used the VSTEP (Vietnamese Standardized Test of English Proficiency) speaking assessment criteria to evaluate students' English speaking skills using Flipgrid video discussion platforms. The researchers assessed students' speaking samples by peers and instructors using the VSTEP rubric. The aim was to understand the impact of Flipgrid on students' English speaking skills without a statistical comparison. This qualitative approach allowed for a deeper understanding of students' experiences and perceptions, allowing for a deeper understanding of contextual factors contributing to changes in speaking abilities. The researchers aimed to develop a more holistic understanding of Flipgrid's impact, rather than relying solely on numerical test scores.

### ***Research Instruments***

#### ***Online Questionnaire***

The study employed an online questionnaire as the first research instrument to gather more specific data on the participants' attitudes towards the Flipgrid treatment. The online questionnaire format was chosen over traditional paper-based methods, as web-based questionnaires allow for quicker and more convenient data collection. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts. Part 1 collected demographic information such as gender, age, major, and English learning experience. Part 2 contained 15 statements across four constructs: (1) general perceptions of Flipgrid, (2) its impact on speaking performance and confidence, (3) its influence on engagement, collaboration, and speaking practice opportunities, and (4) perceptions of enjoyment, discussion, and motivation when using Flipgrid. A 5-point Likert scale was used for participants to self-evaluate the Flipgrid application. To ensure comprehension, the online questionnaire was provided in both Vietnamese and English. Anonymity was maintained by not requiring participants to provide their names.

#### ***Online Interviews***

The study used online interviews to collect qualitative data on students' perceptions of Flipgrid, an English-speaking practice tool. The interviews, lasting 10-15 minutes, were conducted over five days with all seven students participating and coded as ST1, ST2, ST3,... to ST7. The interviews were meticulously documented and audio-recorded, providing supplementary evidence to the quantitative survey findings. The interviews allowed researchers to delve deeper into students' perspectives on the benefits and difficulties they faced during the Flipgrid application process. Interview protocols were developed to guide note-taking, and transcripts were translated into English for qualitative data content analysis. The interviews focused on students' motivation, attitudes towards Flipgrid, perceived changes in confidence, fluency, pronunciation, and overall communication skills, feedback on their speaking performance, and their preferences for better integration into the VSTEP classroom. The interviewees were recruited through various channels, including emails, seminars, and direct recommendations from course instructors.

### *Five VSTEP Speaking Assessment Criteria*

The current study employed an official scoring rubric for VSTEP assessments, which has been approved by the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and utilized at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Education to train teachers and lecturers on scoring these tests. A summary of the key scoring criteria is presented as follows:

Table 2: VSTEP Speaking Assessment Criteria

Five VSTEP speaking assessment criteria		Scoring scale
<b>Grammar (0.2)</b>	Range and Accuracy	0-10
<b>Vocabulary (0.2)</b>	Range and Flexibility	0-10
<b>Pronunciation (0.2)</b>	Individual Sounds, Stress and Intonation	0-10
<b>Fluency (0.2)</b>	Hesitation and Topic Development	0-10
<b>Structures (0.2)</b>	Coherence and Cohesion	0-10

The VSTEP speaking assessment assessed students' English speaking skills using five criteria: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and structures. Each of these criteria was scored on a 0-10 scale. The study used both the official VSTEP scoring rubric and student-generated video artifacts for data collection. This comprehensive approach ensured the rigor and credibility of the evaluations, and allowed for future comparisons to broader MOET-recognized benchmarks of English language competency. The use of the standardized VSTEP rubric allowed for future comparisons of the study findings.

### *Ensuring Credibility*

The study used various strategies to ensure its reliability and credibility. Triangulation was used to cross-verify findings from multiple data sources, providing a more nuanced understanding of how technology aids in developing English speaking skills among Vietnamese EFL students. Peer review was another crucial strategy, involving regular discussions with supervisors to refine the analytical approach and offer constructive feedback. Reflexivity was also emphasized to maintain objectivity and reduce personal bias. The researchers separated data collection and analysis phases, focusing on gathering participants' perspectives before interpreting the data. This approach allowed for a more impartial analysis, contributing to the study's credibility. By prioritizing participants' voices and experiences, the findings were grounded in authentic perspectives, adding depth and reliability to the conclusions drawn.

## **Results and Discussion**

Table 3 presents the background information of the study participants, offering a detailed overview of their demographic characteristics. This table includes key details such as age, gender, educational background, and prior experience with English language learning. By providing this information, the table offers a contextual understanding of the participants, which is essential for interpreting the study's findings. The diversity in the participants' backgrounds contributes to the richness of the data and supports the broader applicability of the study's results.

Table 3: Background information on study participants

No.	Information	N=30		
		Option	Frequency	Proportion
1	Gender	Male	18	60%
		Female	12	40%
2	Age	18	24	80%

No.	Information	N=30		
		Option	Frequency	Proportion
		19	3	10%
		20	2	6.66%
		21	1	3.33%
3	Years of learning English	9+ years	25	83.3%
		8 years	3	10%
		7 years	2	6.66%
4	Computer knowledge	Poor	0	0%
		Fair	17	56.6%
		Good	6	20%
		Very good	4	13.3%
		Excellent	3	10%
5	Frequency of computer use	Every day	27	90%
		Once a week	2	6.66%
		Once a month	1	3.33%
		Never	0	0

### *Flipgrid Impacts the Students' Self-confidence*

The survey results demonstrate that Flipgrid positively impacts students' language confidence, with 73.33% expressing confidence in their project success. This finding aligns with Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which emphasizes observational learning and social interaction in building self-efficacy. The strong mean score of 3.90 indicates overall confidence, though variability (standard deviation of 1.012) suggests some uncertainty among students, reflecting Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1980), which posits that motivation and confidence are influenced by feelings of competence and autonomy. Studies, such as those by Zheng et al. (2016), show that platforms enabling peer interaction, like Flipgrid, enhance engagement and confidence by providing a low-stakes environment for language practice. Regarding technical skills, 70.00% of students felt capable (mean score of 3.73), but a higher standard deviation (1.062) indicates some uncertainty, which relates to Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasizing the importance of social context in learning. To support students, educators could implement training sessions, as suggested by Lai and Hwang (2016), which found that targeted support improves technological skills. Additionally, 70.00% of students felt confident in performing Flipgrid assignments (mean score of 3.77), demonstrating the platform's effectiveness in promoting language proficiency, consistent with Constructivist Learning Theory. By allowing multimodal expression, as noted in research by Guo et al. (2020), Flipgrid encourages student investment in learning, thereby increasing confidence.

Table 4: Survey items regarding the students' perceptions related to Confidence

Items	Contents surveyed	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1.1	<i>I was confident that I would complete the Flipgrid project successfully.</i>	1 3.33%	2 6.67%	5 16.67%	13 43.33%	9 30.00%	3.90	1.012
1.2	<i>I was confident that I would master all of the technical skills.</i>	1 3.33%	4 13.33%	4 13.33%	14 46.67%	7 23.33%	3.73	1.062
1.3	<i>I was confident that I could perform admirably on the Flipgrid assignments.</i>	1 3.33%	5 16.67%	3 10.00%	12 40.00%	9 30.00%	3.77	1.146

Notes:

SD=strong disagree, D=disagree, N=neither agree nor disagree, A=agree, SA=strongly agree, SD= standard deviation

### ***Flipgrid Impacts the Students' Critical Engagement***

The survey data indicates that Flipgrid significantly enhances students' critical engagement, with 73.33% finding the tasks engaging (mean score of 3.73). This aligns with Constructivist Learning Theory, which emphasizes knowledge construction through active participation. The variability in engagement (standard deviation of 1.11) suggests differing student experiences, consistent with Chickering and Gamson's Seven Principles for Good Practice that stress active learning. Research by Zheng et al. (2016) supports the idea that platforms facilitating peer feedback increase engagement by fostering a community of learners. Additionally, 73.33% of students felt a sense of control over their learning (mean score of 3.90), linking to Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (1980), which highlights the importance of autonomy for intrinsic motivation. Moreover, 70.00% of students found the tasks meaningful (mean score of 3.88), echoing Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, which asserts that meaningful experiences enhance engagement. The variability (standard deviation of 1.24) suggests that not all tasks resonate with every student, indicating the need for diverse and relevant assignments, as supported by Guo et al. (2020).

Table 5: Survey items regarding the students' perceptions related to their engagement

Items	Contents surveyed	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1.4	<i>The Flipgrid tasks were very engaging.</i>	1 3.33%	4 13.33%	3 10.00%	16 53.33%	6 20.00%	3.73	1.11
1.5	<i>When doing the Flipgrid tasks, I controlled my learning.</i>	1 3.33%	3 10.00%	4 13.33%	12 40.00%	10 33.33%	3.90	1.12
1.6	<i>The content of the Flipgrid tasks was meaningful to me.</i>	2 5.00%	5 12.50%	5 12.50%	12 30.00%	6 40.00%	3.88	1.24

### ***Flipgrid Impacts the Students' Strong Motivation***

The findings on student motivation related to Flipgrid indicate a generally positive outlook, with 63.33% of students reporting enhanced enjoyment in learning English (mean score of 3.77). This aligns with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan, which emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation in facilitating deeper learning experiences. The enjoyment expressed by students highlights the importance of intrinsic motivation, as engaging with Flipgrid fosters creativity and self-expression, leading to greater persistence, as noted by Ryan and Deci (2000). Additionally, 66.66% of students found the project engaging (mean score of 3.67), reflecting Constructivist Learning Theory. Research by Zheng et al. (2016) supports this, indicating that peer interaction significantly enhances engagement and motivation. Variability in responses suggests the need for diverse tasks to cater to different learning styles. Furthermore, 73.33% viewed the project as challenging (mean score of 3.87), highlighting the importance of optimal challenge for maintaining motivation. According to Csikszentmihalyi's Flow Theory, balancing challenge and skill fosters immersion in learning. This is supported by Guo et al. (2020), who found that challenging tasks enhance motivation as students strive for mastery.

Table 6: Survey items regarding the students' perceptions related to Motivation

Items	Contents surveyed	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1.7	<i>The Flipgrid project made me like English more.</i>	0 0.00%	5 16.67%	6 20.00%	10 33.33%	9 30.00%	3.77	1.08
1.8	<i>The Flipgrid project was interesting.</i>	2 6.67%	3 10.00%	5 16.67%	13 43.33%	7 23.33%	3.67	1.19
1.9	<i>The Flipgrid project was challenging.</i>	1 3.33%	4 13.33%	3 10.00%	12 40.00%	10 33.33%	3.87	1.12

## Findings the Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Flipgrid in Language Learning Process

Several classifications are used to categorize students' perspectives on the benefits and drawbacks of implementing Flipgrid. The codes and the direct citations that go with them are included in Table 7.

Table 7: Benefits and drawbacks of Flipgrid

Category	Code	f	Sample Sentences
Benefits	- Engaging video format	8	+“ <i>Flipgrid's interactive video format engaged students and encouraged participation</i> ” (ST1).
	- Collaborative learning environment	9	+“ <i>The platform facilitated collaboration and peer-to-peer learning</i> ” (ST2).
	- Mobile-friendly design	7	+“ <i>Flipgrid's mobile-friendly design made it accessible for students</i> ” (ST3).
Drawbacks	-Technical Difficulties	7	+“ <i>The app frequently experienced technical issues like crashes and audio problems</i> ” (ST7).
	-Steep Learning Curve	5	+“ <i>Students struggled to navigate the app and understand its features</i> ” (ST5).
	-Limited Customization	6	+“ <i>The limited customization options made it difficult to tailor the experience</i> ” (ST4).
	-Lack of Moderation Tools	4	+“ <i>The absence of robust moderation tools led to concerns about inappropriate content</i> ” (ST6).

User feedback on Flipgrid as a language learning tool reveals both advantages and disadvantages that impact its effectiveness. Eight participants noted that Flipgrid’s interactive video format significantly enhances student participation, aligning with Constructivist Learning Theory, which emphasizes the importance of active engagement. Research by Zheng et al. (2016) supports this notion, indicating that peer interaction can boost levels of engagement. Additionally, nine participants highlighted Flipgrid's capacity for collaboration and peer-to-peer learning, resonating with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which asserts that social interaction is fundamental to cognitive development. One participant remarked, “*Flipgrid facilitated collaboration and peer-to-peer learning*” (ST2). Furthermore, seven participants appreciated the platform's mobile accessibility, which is crucial for modern learners. As noted, “*Flipgrid's mobile-friendly design made it accessible for students*” (ST3), reflecting Connectivism and its emphasis on the role of technology in learning. On the downside, seven participants reported significant technical issues, such as crashes and audio problems. Research by Bates and Sangra (2011) highlights the importance of technical reliability for maintaining student engagement. Additionally, five participants expressed concerns about navigating Flipgrid’s features, with one stating, “*Students struggled to navigate the app and understand its features*” (ST5). Adult Learning Theory suggests that effective environments should minimize obstacles for learners. Six participants noted that limited customization options hindered their ability to tailor the user experience, with one participant saying, “*The limited customization options made it difficult to tailor the experience*” (ST4). Lastly, four participants raised concerns about inadequate moderation tools, which can lead to inappropriate content. One commented, “*The absence of robust moderation tools led to concerns about inappropriate content*” (ST6), emphasizing the need for a safe learning environment as outlined in the Community of Inquiry Framework.



## Findings on Students Feel about the Implementation of Flipgrid

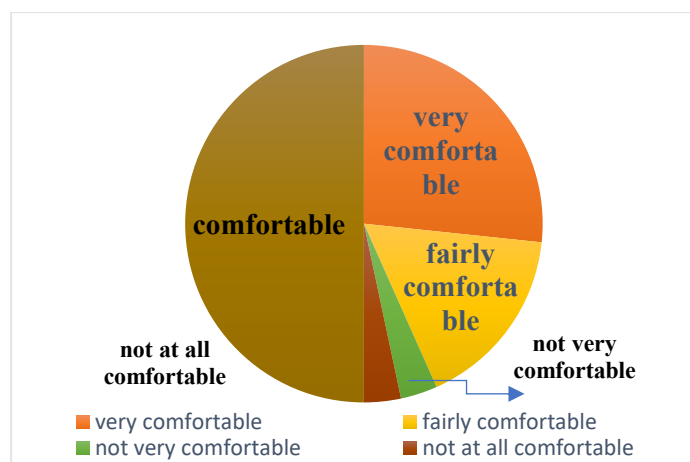


Figure 1: Level of comfort with the Flipgrid use

According to the survey, four-fifths of respondents (80%), said they felt very comfortable using Flipgrid in the classroom. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which stresses autonomy and relatedness in motivating learners, is consistent with this high degree of comfort. Flipgrid appears to be user-friendly, as seen by the low discomfort rate of just a fifth (20%), which is consistent with Constructivist Learning Theory and Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy). The findings on the implementation of Flipgrid in language learning have significant practical implications for various stakeholders. *For learners*, the high comfort level with Flipgrid suggests increased engagement, enhancing speaking skills and language proficiency while fostering self-expression and confidence in a supportive environment. *For teachers*, the emphasis on engaging technology highlights the potential of Flipgrid to create dynamic, collaborative assignments that facilitate interactive learning and inform professional development. In curriculum planning, the positive reception of Flipgrid underscores the need to integrate digital literacy and interactive tools into language courses, promoting active participation through projects like video responses and peer reviews. Pedagogically, the findings advocate for constructivist approaches and blended learning models that combine traditional instruction with technology-enhanced activities, enriching discussions with diverse cultural perspectives. Lastly, *for institutional policymakers*, the findings emphasize the necessity of supporting technology integration through teacher training and resource allocation, guiding future educational initiatives to improve language learning outcomes across diverse populations.

## Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The study on Flipgrid's impact on English speaking skills in 30 first-year students in certain countries has limitations, including an uneven participation rate, insufficient representation across academic years, incomplete data, and limited member checks. The study's small sample size and constrained context make it difficult to generalize the findings. Future research should consider longitudinal studies with a larger sample size and conduct experiments or longitudinal studies using pre/post-tests to evaluate the role of dictionaries in specialized English learning environments. Additionally, investigating Flipgrid's adaptability and effectiveness across diverse cultural and linguistic contexts would provide valuable insights. Expanding the sample size and including a more diverse group of students would also enhance the generalizability of the findings. These approaches would deepen the knowledge of how Flipgrid influences English-speaking skills in different settings and among varied populations.

## Conclusion

This empirical study, focusing on EFL students utilizing Flipgrid, demonstrates the platform's effectiveness in enhancing English speaking skills. The findings highlight Flipgrid's ability to create a supportive and interactive environment that encourages active participation in language learning. Students reported increased confidence, learner engagement, motivation, improved pronunciation, and a better understanding of conversational English, attributed to the platform's features that enable repeated practice and peer feedback. These results align with previous research suggesting that technology-mediated language learning can be a valuable tool for fostering language development (Smith, 2020).

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# Charting the Utilization of Machine Learning Algorithms in Faculty Evaluation: A Bibliometric Review

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## ABSTRACT

The study provides a comprehensive review and bibliometric analysis of research focused on the application of machine learning in faculty evaluation. The rationale stems from the growing need for more objective, data-driven approaches to assessing teaching effectiveness. Traditional methods, such as manual observations and student feedback, have often been criticized for their subjectivity and limited scope. Machine learning, with its ability to process large volumes of complex data, offers a more comprehensive and precise assessment. The key objective of this research was to analyze Scopus-indexed documents from 2010 to 2023, examining trends in publication, global collaboration networks, and the influence of these networks on research productivity. Of 126 initial documents, 115 remained after exclusions. The study highlights the dominance of machine learning in improving teaching evaluation, particularly identifying gradient boosting as a commonly used algorithm. Geographically, research was predominantly concentrated in China, with limited representation from other regions. The results suggest an increasing recognition of data-driven approaches in educational assessment, although concerns about fairness and equity remain. The study concludes by recommending further research, incorporating multiple databases for a broader perspective, and addressing ethical concerns through standardized frameworks and empirical validation to ensure unbiased application of machine learning in educational contexts.

**Keywords:** bibliometrics, faculty effectiveness, machine learning, data-driven approach

## Introduction

In recent years, the integration of machine learning techniques in educational research has sparked a significant shift in how teaching effectiveness is assessed. This emerging paradigm promises to provide more accurate, objective, and data-driven insights into the quality of teaching practices. However, as the field evolves at the nexus of machine learning and educational evaluation, there remains a critical gap in our understanding of its development, impact, and regional disparities. Existing literature primarily focuses on individual studies and technical aspects, leaving unexplored the broader landscape, evolving trends, and regional dynamics in the research on using machine learning to assess teaching effectiveness.

This study aims to bridge this gap by conducting a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of the research landscape concerning the use of machine learning for teaching effectiveness assessment. The review addressed three specific research questions:

1. What is the landscape of research on using machine learning to assess teaching effectiveness, and how has this field evolved over the past decade in terms of publication trends, research methodologies, and collaboration patterns?
2. Which machine learning algorithms are most employed in studies related to teaching effectiveness assessment, and what are the prevailing trends in their application and performance within educational contexts?
3. How does the geographical distribution of research on using machine learning to assess teaching effectiveness vary, and are there any regional patterns in terms of prolific authors, institutions, or research themes?

By systematically examining publication trends, research methodologies, collaboration patterns, machine learning algorithm prevalence, and regional variations, this study seeks to provide a holistic understanding of the field's evolution and its potential implications for education systems worldwide. Such insights are not only academically significant but also have practical implications for educators, institutions, and policymakers seeking evidence-based strategies for enhancing teaching quality. Understanding how the field has developed over the past decade, identifying prevalent machine learning algorithms, and mapping out regional patterns will empower stakeholders to make informed decisions, adopt best practices, and harness the transformative potential of machine learning in education.

## **Conceptual Underpinnings and Review**

The integration of machine learning into faculty evaluation represents a significant evolution in educational assessment, influenced by historical perspectives and driven by technological milestones. Traditionally, faculty evaluation relied on manual observations, student feedback, and quantitative metrics, offering limited insights into teaching effectiveness. However, the digital era brought about a shift, enabling institutions to collect extensive data related to teaching and learning. In the early 2000s, initial applications of machine learning focused on analyzing student data for predicting academic outcomes, setting the stage for similar approaches in evaluating faculty performance (Brusilovsky et al., 2005; Arnold & Pistilli, 2012; Attewell & Monaghan, 2015). As data analytics gained prominence in higher education, institutions began utilizing data to make informed decisions about student success and institutional effectiveness. This trend paved the way for the application of advanced machine learning algorithms to faculty evaluation (Cambria et al., 2017; Trivedi, 2022).

With the advent of sophisticated algorithms like deep learning and natural language processing, institutions gained the capacity to analyze complex data sources such as student feedback, instructional materials, and online interactions. These algorithms can uncover intricate patterns in teaching methods and student engagement that traditional methods often miss. Moreover, machine learning's ability to provide real-time feedback based on online interactions has enhanced faculty members' teaching strategies, enabling timely adjustments for improved learning experiences. An essential aspect of integrating machine learning into faculty evaluation is the mitigation of bias. Algorithms designed to reduce bias have become crucial in ensuring that assessment processes are fair and unbiased. This is particularly relevant given concerns about equity and fairness in educational settings.

## **Methods**

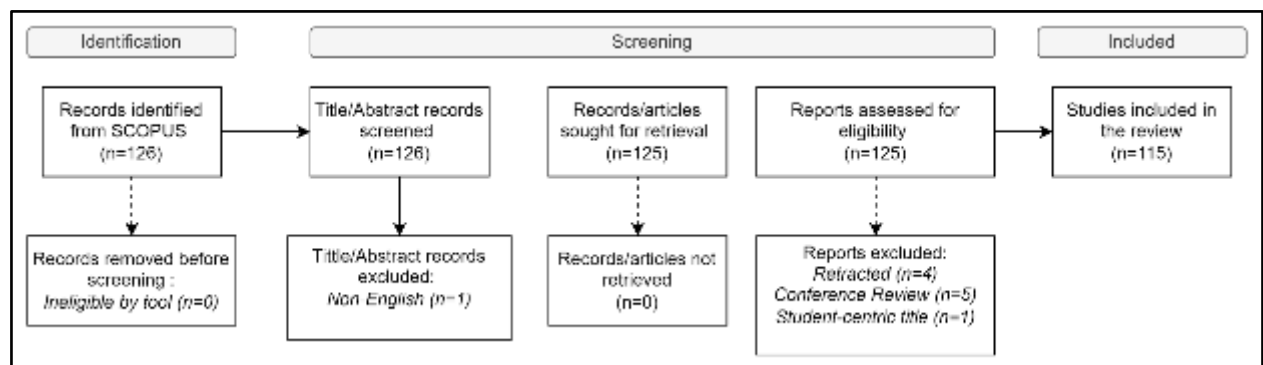
A bibliometric review is a systematic and quantitative analysis of published academic literature within a specific field, conducted to assess various aspects such as publication trends, citation patterns, research collaborations, and thematic evolution. It involves the application of bibliometric methods and techniques to large datasets of scholarly publications. The primary objective and purpose of a bibliometric review is to provide an evidence-based understanding of the intellectual structure, development, and impact of research in a particular area. By identifying key publications, authors, institutions, and research themes, a bibliometric review aids researchers and decision-makers in gauging the state of the field, highlighting the broad trends in knowledge production and dissemination, and to recognizing emerging trends in the field (Pitchard, 1969).

The study will analyze publication data from the Scopus database, focusing on works published between 2010 and 2023 that explore the use of machine learning in faculty evaluation. The visualizations will be based on the work of Linnenluecke et al. (2020), Moral-Muñoz et al. (2020), and Kovačević & Hallinger (2019). To extract literature from databases, a Boolean expression to

connect keywords for the search is used. A Boolean expression is a logical operator that helps combine keywords to form more precise search queries. The most frequently used Boolean operators are AND, OR, and NOT (Chen & Xiao, 2016).

### *Collection of publication data*

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis (PRISMA) methodology was utilized for gathering publication data, drawing upon the guidelines proposed by Page et al. in 2021, as well as those by Moher in 2019 and 2013. Employing the PRISMA approach, four distinct phases were adhered to: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. This study exhibits a partiality towards publications indexed in Scopus and those composed in the English language and is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analysis (PRISMA).

In the *Identification* phase, the researcher employed the Scopus index in August 2023 to identify all articles pertaining to faculty evaluation through machine learning techniques. Scopus, a comprehensive database, facilitates the retrieval and exportation of bibliographic information for published documents. Within the Scopus search engine, the investigator conducted a search using the keyword "((‘teaching effectiveness’ OR ‘teaching evaluation’ OR ‘faculty evaluation’ OR ‘instructor assessment’) AND (‘machine learning’ OR ‘data mining’ OR ‘predictive modeling’ OR ‘educational analytics’) AND (university OR ‘higher education’ OR college))” specifically in the engine’s “source” field.

Using the Boolean operator OR in the first and second part of the search string ensures that articles containing any one of the terms will be included in the search results, broadening the scope to capture a range of articles related to assessing teaching quality and machine learning techniques within the confines of tertiary education. The logical AND operator is used to combine the first part of the search string with the second part. It means that articles in the search results should meet both conditions: containing one of the specified teaching-related phrases and also containing one of the specified machine learning-related phrases. This function extracted 125 documents, the oldest of which was two (2) documents published in 2010 and the most recent was five (5) documents published in 2023.

In the Screening phase, other records were excluded. Retracted articles (n=4), review on conferences (n=5), and articles that are focused on evaluation of students (n=1). The titles, abstracts and keywords were reviewed manually to remove duplicates and items that are not related to the area of investigation. The following are the inclusion criteria that were used:

1. Articles that centered on faculty evaluation in higher education and/or vocational training
2. Articles that discuss machine learning and data mining

As a result, a total of 115 articles were included in the final list. The bibliographic data associated with these documents was extracted from Scopus and organized within a Microsoft Excel file. Excluding the headers, this Excel file contained 115 rows, with each row corresponding to an individual published document featuring 46 columns containing diverse bibliographic information delineating the attributes of these articles. This encompassed particulars like author names, publication years, titles, author affiliations, citation counts, abstracts, keywords, co-citations, and other relevant data. This dataset served as the foundation for the analysis conducted in this review.

### ***Data Analysis***

Metadata on the documents pertaining to the application of machine learning in higher education was extracted from Scopus and compiled into a master Excel file. Subsequently, Scopus' analytical tools and Excel were employed to perform descriptive statistical analyses (e.g., number of articles by country and author), with the objective of providing insights into the landscape and trends of machine learning's application within the context of faculty evaluation. It is then imported into VOSviewer, a bibliometric software package extensively utilized for science mapping (Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). Bibliometric analyses conducted in VOSviewer encompassed both author and document citation analyses, as well as author co-citation analysis.

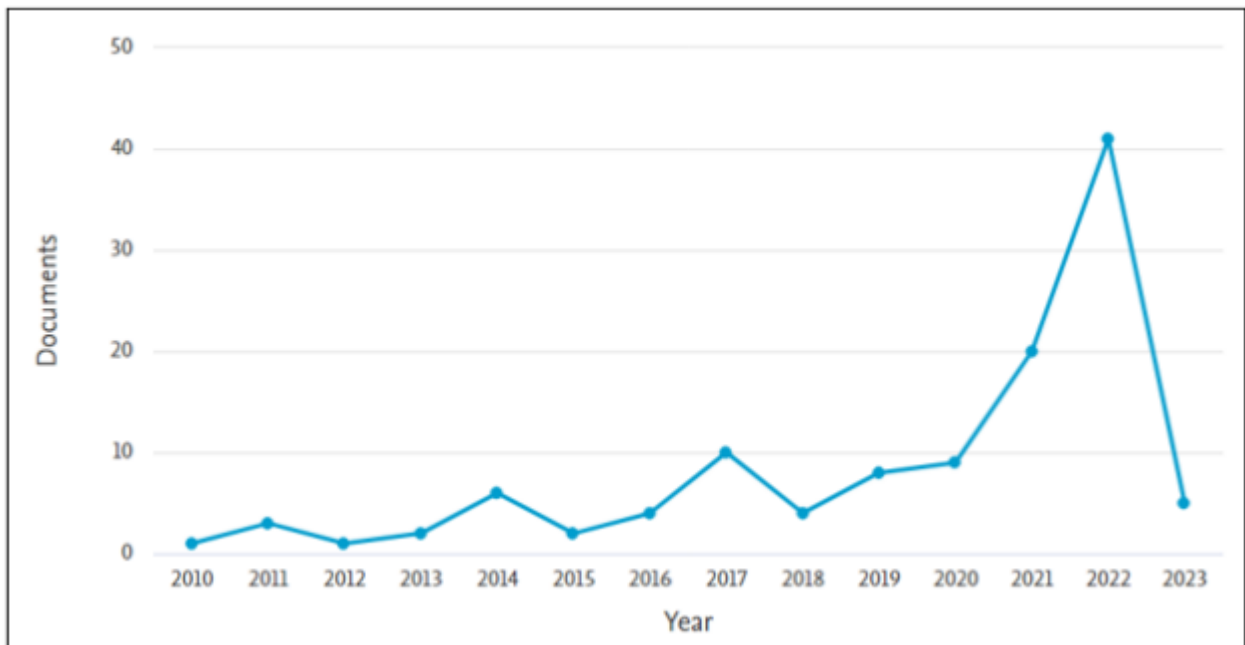
Citation analysis has a longstanding history of use in identifying influential authors and significant documents within various knowledge domains (Zupic & Čater, 2015). Using VOSviewer to perform citation analysis, the frequency with which authors and documents within the review dataset had been cited in other documents indexed in Scopus is made. These citations are termed "Scopus citations" because they exclusively comprise citations from documents included in the Scopus index.

Author co-citation analysis (ACA) is a bibliometric technique used to examine the intellectual structure of a research field by analyzing the frequency with which pairs of authors are cited together in subsequent publications. This method assumes that authors who are frequently cited together are likely working in related areas or share similar theoretical perspectives). By mapping these co-citation patterns, researchers can visualize the relationships between key scholars in a field, identify influential authors and schools of thought, and trace the evolution of ideas over time. ACA can reveal both the core contributors to a discipline and the connections between different sub-fields or approaches, providing valuable insights into the social and cognitive structure of scientific communities (White & Griffith, 1981; Zhao & Strotmann (2015).

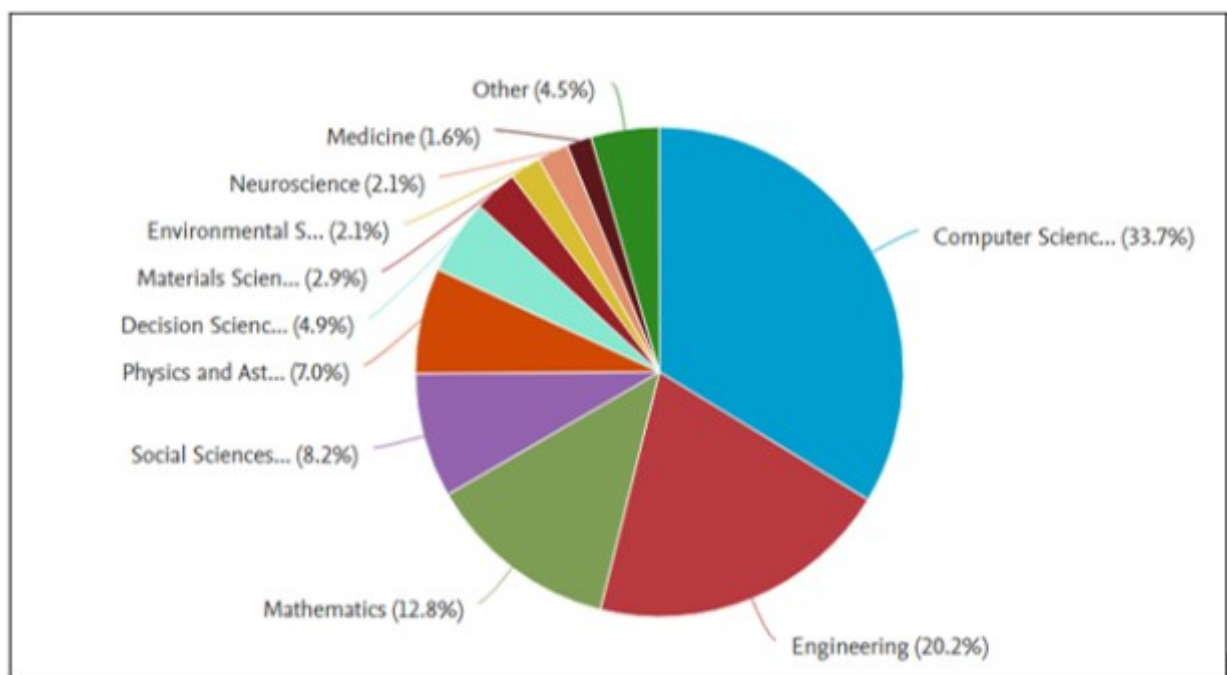
### **Results**

The results are systematically presented in accordance with each of the research inquiries. For research question 1: What is the landscape of research on using machine learning in assessing teaching effectiveness, and how has this field evolved over the past decade in terms of publication trends, research methodologies, and collaboration patterns? The analysis shows (see Figure 1 and Figure 2) that there were fifty-eight (58) article papers and fifty-seven (57) conference papers between 2010 and August of 2023. These are sourced from Journal (57), Conference Proceedings (44), and Book Series (14). Many of these literatures are in the subject area of Computer Science (82), Engineering (49), Mathematics (31), and Social Science (20).





**Figure 1.** Growth trajectory of the literature (n=115)

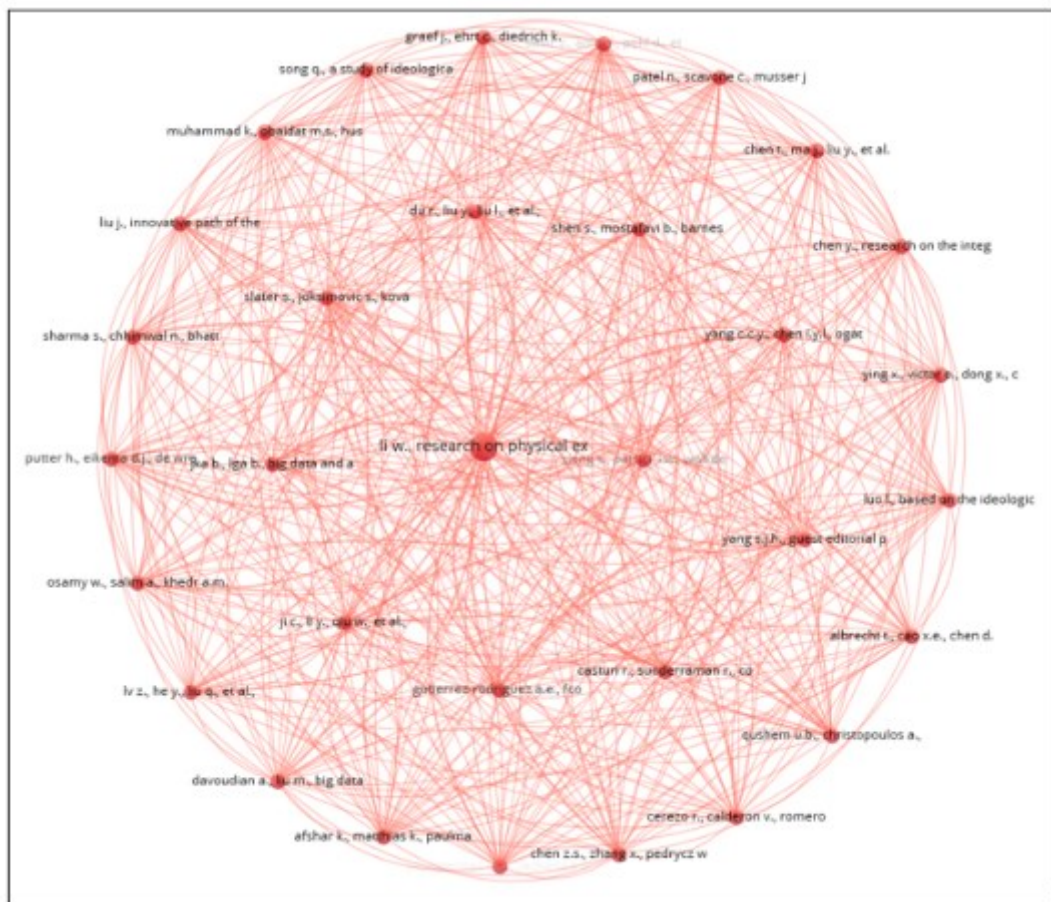


**Figure 2.** Subject area distribution (n=115)

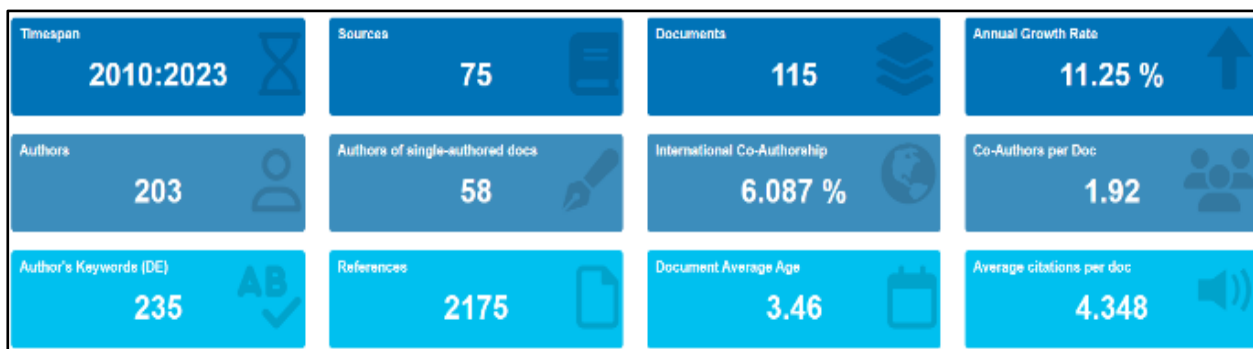
Setting a threshold of at least 3 citations and cited reference as the unit of analysis, the co-citation map generated by VOSviewer to visualize the similarities of authors is presented in Figure 3. Within this co-citation map, individual nodes symbolize distinct scholars, with the node size directly proportional to the frequency of author co-citations. In Figure 3, the interconnectedness and density of the "links" between scholars signify the frequency with which one scholar has been co-cited alongside another scholar. Out of 2,162 cited references, only 5 authors met the threshold. Authors Basu and Jones, Eijk and Lievens, Varley, and Wei have the most co-citations with a total link strength of 9. Chandra et al., are not included because their total link strength is 0. The most relevant sources are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Most relevant sources

Sources	Articles
ACM International Conference Proceeding Series	5
Computational Intelligence and Neuroscience	5
International Journal Of Emerging Technologies In Learning	4
Journal Of Physics: Conference Series	4
Lecture Notes In Electrical Engineering	4
Security And Communication Networks	4
Wireless Communications And Mobile Computing	4
Advances In Intelligent Systems And Computing	3
Boletin Tecnico/Technical Bulletin	3
Journal Of Intelligent And Fuzzy Systems	3

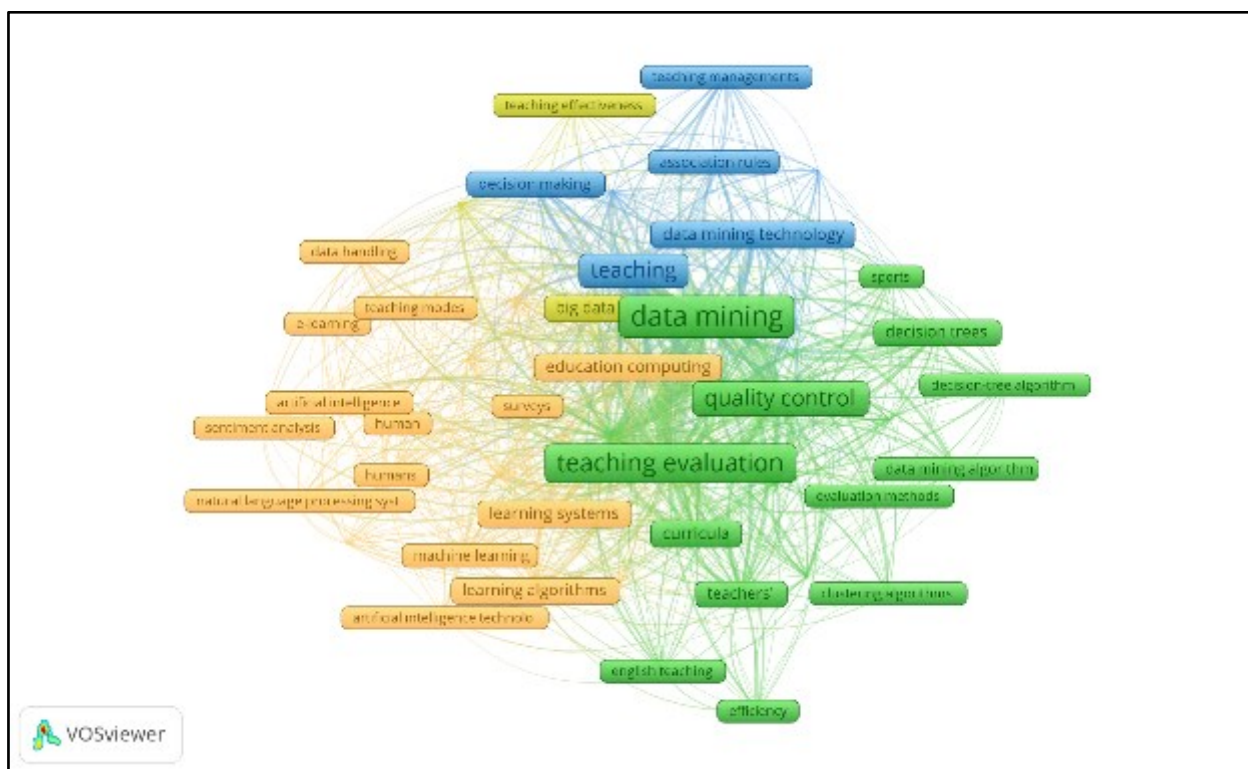


**Figure 3.** Author co-citation map using cited references as the unit of analysis (author co-citation network; 197 authors; threshold of 2 citations; display 32 authors; 1 cluster; 496 links; 527 total link strength).



**Figure 4.** Overview of the dataset.

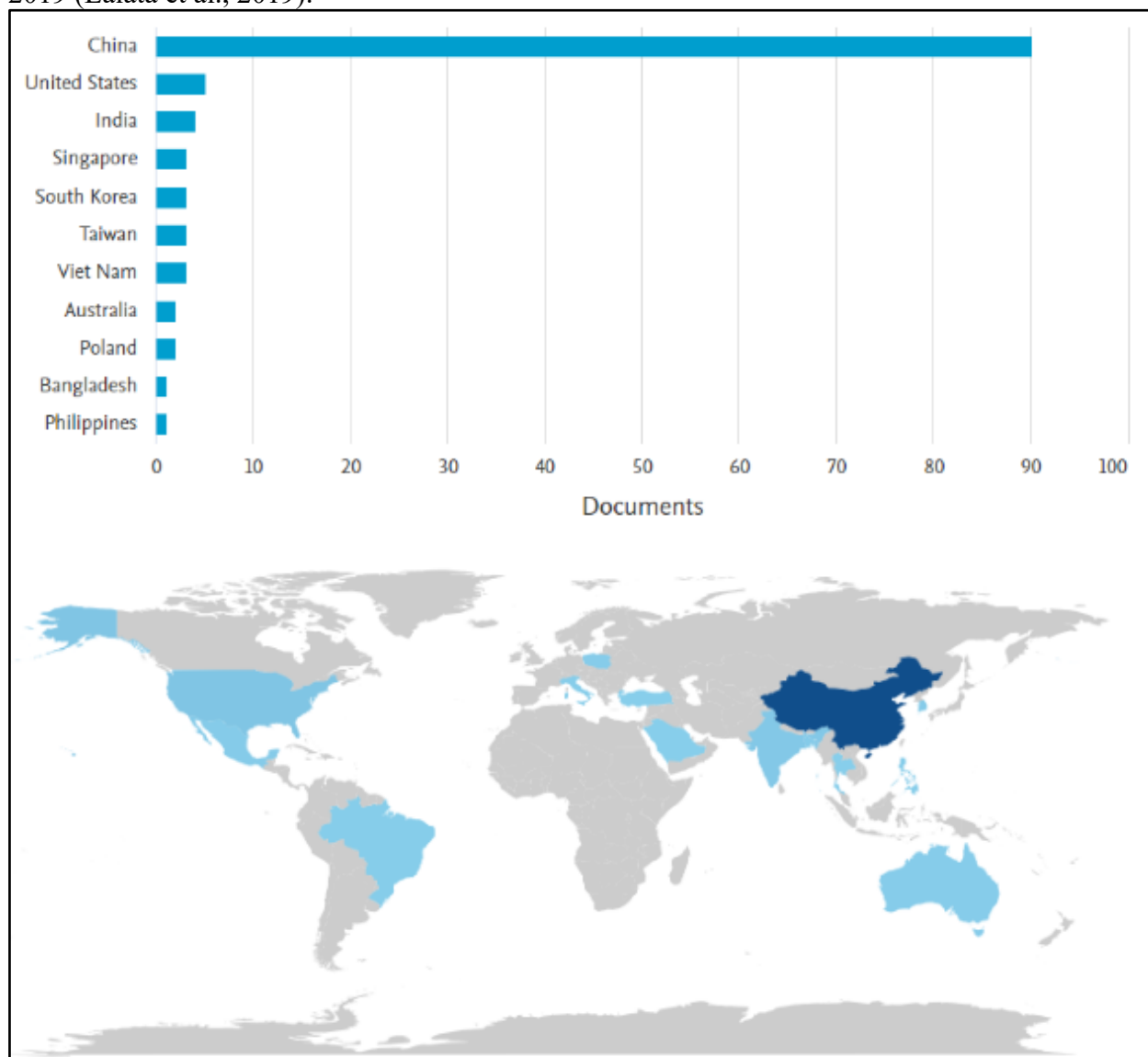
For research question #2: Which machine learning algorithms are most employed in studies related to teaching effectiveness assessment, and what are the prevailing trends in their application and performance within educational contexts? Setting a threshold of at least 5 for the minimum occurrence of keywords, the co-occurrence analysis generates the map depicted in Figure 5. Using the association method for normalization generated 755 keywords, 48 of which meet the threshold divided into 4 clusters. The first cluster is orange with 19 items, the second cluster is green with 18 items, the third cluster is blue with 18 items also, and the fourth cluster is yellow with 3 items. The machine learning algorithm that is used in studies in teaching effectiveness is gradient boosting which appears in the first cluster.



**Figure 5.** Co-occurrence analysis using index keywords (keywords co-occurrence network; threshold of 5 minimum occurrence; 4 clusters; 48 keywords; 755 total keywords).

The documents by country or territory needed in research question #3: How does the geographical distribution of research on using machine learning to assess teaching effectiveness vary, and are there any regional patterns in terms of prolific authors, institutions, or research themes? Figure 6 shows that most of the research came from China (90), United States (5), India (4) and Singapore

(3). Philippines has one in the article in the ACM International Conference Proceeding Series in 2019 (Lalata et al., 2019).



**Figure 6.** Global distribution of literature, 2010–2023 (n = 115)

It is emphasized that this research's bibliometric analysis does not concentrate on the findings reported in the published documents. Instead, it focuses on the trends and sources of literature regarding the application of machine learning in faculty evaluation, with the scope limited to the Scopus database.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the 2023 bibliometric study examining the intersection of teaching effectiveness evaluation and machine learning applications in higher education, several key trends have emerged. The Citation and co-citation analyses revealed influential authors and foundational papers, indicating distinct clusters within the field. Both analyses also reveal a significant increase in publications combining teaching evaluation and machine learning techniques over the past five years, indicating growing recognition of data-driven approaches in assessing teaching quality.

However, the research remains geographically concentrated, primarily in China, followed by the United States, India, and Singapore, underscoring the need for more global representation.

The analysis identified gradient boosting as the most employed algorithm, demonstrating its applicability and performance within educational contexts. Despite the growth in literature, there is a critical need for more empirical research to validate the effectiveness of machine learning techniques in educational assessment and to address potential biases to ensure fairness and equity. This can be done by incorporating data from multiple academic databases. While Scopus provides valuable insights, databases such as Web of Science, Google Scholar, PubMed, Microsoft Academic, and Dimensions offer complementary perspectives and potentially broader coverage. Web of Science, for instance, excels in comprehensive citation data, while Google Scholar captures a wider range of academic outputs. PubMed could provide specialized insights for medical and life sciences research. By triangulating data from these diverse sources, researchers can enhance the robustness and comprehensiveness of their bibliometric analyses, potentially uncovering trends and relationships that might be missed when relying on a single database. This multi-database approach, although more complex, promises a more nuanced and complete picture of the academic landscape in teaching effectiveness evaluation and machine learning applications in higher education.

Finally, this study recommends developing standardized frameworks for implementing machine learning in teaching evaluations, conducting longitudinal studies to assess long-term impacts, establishing comprehensive ethical guidelines, encouraging cross-cultural research, investigating hybrid approaches that combine machine learning with traditional evaluation methods, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, and examining policy implications. By addressing these recommendations, the field can progress towards more robust, fair, and effective use of machine learning in assessing and improving teaching effectiveness in higher education, not only in the Philippines but within the Southeast Asia region.

### **Declaration on the use of AI in the writing process**

During the preparation of this work the author used ChatGPT to enhance readability and refine the language. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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# Driving Educational Excellence: AI-Powered Predictions of Faculty Effectiveness

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## ABSTRACT

Early prediction of faculty effectiveness enables timely interventions to enhance educational quality, optimize resource allocation, and drive improved student outcomes. This study implemented and evaluated predictive models to **accurately forecast teaching effectiveness** at XYZ College. The dataset comprised 4,285 records of faculty evaluations from academic years 2019-2022, including ratings by students (Model 1), peers (Model 2), and a combination thereof (Model 3). Exploratory data analysis using Python libraries facilitated data cleaning and visualization. Six machine learning algorithms - XGBoost, Random Forest, Support Vector Machine, Gradient Boosting Machine, Naive Bayes, and Decision Tree - were trained on data from 2019-2021 (n=3,169) and evaluated on the held-out 2022 data (n=1,115). XGBoost outperformed other techniques, achieving 100% accuracy, precision, recall, and F1 score across all three models, no wrong prediction for Models 1 and 3 and only 1 wrong prediction for Model 2. The high predictive performance demonstrates the potential of machine learning for proactively identifying faculty who may benefit from targeted support and resources to elevate their instructional practice. This study highlights the efficacy of data-driven approaches in higher education for continuous improvement of teaching effectiveness and fostering an environment conducive to student success.

**Keywords:** faculty effectiveness, predictive model, machine learning, higher educational institution

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Faculty Effectiveness

One important aspect of quality education is faculty performance, commonly known as teaching effectiveness and generally assessed via student feedback. It captures different qualities of how the instructor does things such as one's teaching effectiveness or quality, course content delivery, and overall student satisfaction. Given their importance, an assessment of the ability of instructors to support student academic achievement by improving course-specific content understanding is crucial (Agaoglu 2016; Abunasser et al., 2022).

Other literature defines teaching effectiveness as a broader concept encompassing instructor performance. It refers to the capability of a teaching strategy to achieve desired educational outcomes. It focuses on the effectiveness of teaching methods in enhancing the student's learning experience, which is measured by the student's proficiency and performance in the subject matter. This effectiveness is not only about delivering content but also about engaging students in a way that fosters deep understanding and long-term retention of knowledge (Kushik et al., 2020; Fernandez, 2021).

Faculty effectiveness expands on the concept of teaching effectiveness by encompassing a wider range of professional responsibilities within educational institutions. Beyond teaching, faculty



effectiveness involves the ability to excel in research, curriculum development, organizational leadership, and mentoring. This broader effectiveness is closely linked to continuous professional development, often supported by Faculty Development Programs (FDPs). These programs are designed to enhance faculty members' skills across various domains, thereby improving their overall performance and contributing to the academic vitality of institutions (Bilal et al., 2019).

In essence, while instructor performance and teaching effectiveness focus on the direct impact of teaching students, faculty effectiveness includes a comprehensive view of a faculty member's role in an academic setting, emphasizing the importance of ongoing professional growth and development.

## **1.2 Predictive Analytics**

*“As data piles up, we have ourselves a genuine gold rush. But data isn't the gold...The gold is what's discovered therein.” - Eric Siegel, Predictive Analytics: The Power to Predict Who Will Click, Buy, Lie, or Die*

The field of Data Analytics centers on developing algorithmic methods to process and interpret data, often leveraging visualization techniques to reveal hidden intelligence and actionable insights. (Nagpal and Gabrani, 2019)

Educational institutions use predictive modeling and algorithms to target students in order to recruit them and move the needle on outcomes. It is also very important that these tools are designed in such a way as not to introduce bias or aggravate existing bias, and their performance must be meticulously verified. Institutions should partner with vendors who are dedicated to building fair models and algorithms that quantify their fairness performance. (Ekowo and Palmer, 2017)

It is also evident that the use of predictive analytics, through machine learning, has a significant role to play in informing strategic decision-making at Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). It shows how strategic decision-making has a huge effect on the implementation and execution of policies, strategies or any work carried out by these institutions in general. ML algorithms like Decision Trees (DT), Random Forest (RF), and Logistic Regression (LR) are used to predict student outcomes. As a result, smarter decisions by HEI leaders can help improve student success and faculty and institutional effectiveness. The use of predictive analytics in decision-making enables HEIs to have a more informed approach for developing interventions aimed at addressing upstream factors that impact student performance and retention/graduation. ML algorithms provide early predictions and insights that power proactive steps towards more effective interventions, which advantage students as well as institutions alike (Nieto et al., 2019).

Predictive analytics also has a significant positive impact on business performance. Companies that adopt predictive analytics see notable productivity gains compared to non-adopters. These productivity benefits are not just associated but causally linked to its use and highlight the critical role predictive analytics plays in enhancing business outcomes, provided it is supported by the right organizational and technological infrastructure. (Brynjolfsson et al. 2021)

## **1.3 Machine Learning**

Machine learning (ML) is defined as a subset of Artificial Intelligence (AI) that utilizes algorithms to analyze large data, recognize patterns, and make predictions. This capability is especially useful in the context of HEIs, where it can streamline decision-making processes by providing deeper



insights from the available data, thus optimizing resources, supporting governance, and improving institutional outcomes. The use of ML in HEIs aims to address challenges such as academic success, operational efficiency, and overall institutional effectiveness by providing actionable insights through predictive modeling and other analytical techniques (Nieto et al., 2019; Siram et al., 2024).

### ***1.4 Python***

Over the last decade, Python has gone from an experimental choice to a primary language for data science, ML, and more generally software engineering in academic and some industrial contexts. There are several reasons for this growth. Rather, scientific computing and data analysis have a long history with both active communities. The support for specialized libraries such as the pandas, scikit-learn among others has also improved in Python over time making it a better choice. Lastly, Python being a general-purpose programming language is a good choice for creating full-fledged data applications. Together, these attributes have turned Python from a daring choice into the language of choice for data work — an intersection between analytical power and clean software engineering practices (McKinney, 2017).

Python has been popular for a variety of reasons, from its readability with the simple pseudocode-like syntax to its module structure or object-oriented design and other important capabilities like profiling, portability, testing, and self-documentation. It also has a numeric library with which one can store and manipulate large amounts of numerical data. Python offers numerous advantages, including concise code and high readability, making it easier to write and understand. It is both portable and flexible, allowing it to run on various platforms without modification. Python strikes a balance between low-level and high-level programming, offering the best of both worlds. Its continuity ensures long-term support and stability. The language also features robust data structures and benefits from a wealth of available open-source libraries, further enhancing its functionality and appeal (Nagpal and Gabrani, 2019).

### ***1.5 GBM and XGBoost***

Gradient Boosting Machine (GBM) is a technique primarily used for constructing both regression and classification predictive models. It builds new models that align with the negative gradient of the loss function and requires tuning several hyperparameters for optimal performance on each dataset. It combines iterative learning with error reduction, making it powerful but requiring careful parameter optimization (Çakıt and Dağdeviren, 2021; Asselman et al., 2021).

On the other hand, eXtreme Gradient Boosting or XGBoost, is an ensemble method that corrects residuals or errors of prior models to improve predictions. It can be parallelized to leverage multi-core computers, enabling it to handle very large datasets. XGBoost is an advanced implementation of the gradient boosting algorithm, which is widely used for supervised learning tasks, particularly in structured/tabular data scenarios. It is a learning technique that builds a strong predictive model by combining the predictions of multiple weaker models, typically decision trees. XGBoost requires multiple prediction parameters, and the effectiveness of the model often hinges on finding the optimal combination of these parameters. Additionally, it is available as free, open-source software under the Apache-2 license (Asselman et al., 2021).

XGBoost is special because it uses a regularized model designed to reduce overfitting in traditional tree structures. By adding this regularization, XGBoost creates more stable and less individualized

trees that help us generalize better to unseen data making improved classification results (Huang et al., 2019).

## **1.6 Objectives**

As HEIs continuously strive to improve their quality of education, there is a growing interest in leveraging data-driven approaches to understand and predict faculty effectiveness. ML, with its ability to analyze complex patterns in large datasets, presents a promising tool for this purpose. The main objective of this study is to bridge the gap between traditional educational assessment and cutting-edge data science techniques, to provide data-driven decision-making and policies by implementing and evaluating the most accurate ML algorithm for predicting faculty effectiveness models.

## **1.7 Related Studies**

The study of Siram et al. (2024), explores the integration of performance management and ML in HEIs, focusing on predictive modeling and data-driven decision-making to improve academic and operational outcomes. Similarly, studies by Agaoglu (2016) and Abunasser et al. (2022) explore the application of ML to predict and assess instructor performance in HEIs. Another study by Nieto et al., (2019) delves into how strategic decisions at HEIs can be enhanced through the application of ML algorithms to predict graduation rates among undergraduate engineering students in South America.

To build upon the authors' previous study, various ML models including Random Forest (RF), Naive Bayes (NB), Decision Tree (DT), K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN), and Support Vector Machine (SVM) have been explored, with the addition of Gradient Boosting Machine and eXtreme Gradient Boosting since both were eminent in most recent works of literature due to their prediction performance (Çakıt & Dağdeviren, 2021; Asselman et al., 2021) therefore, the authors included it in this study.

## **2. Methods**

This section outlines the step-by-step procedures followed in conducting the research study that is summarized in Figure 1.

**Data.** The dataset comprises faculty evaluations by students (Model 1), their peers (Model 2), and the combination of both students and peer evaluations (Model 3) from Academic Year (AY) 2019 to 2022, totaling 4,285 records. Exploratory data analysis (EDA) using the Pandas and PyGWalker (McDonald, 2023, Wang, n.d.) libraries in Python were employed to clean and visually understand the data. For building, training, and testing the model, the data for AY 2019, 2020, and 2021 are used (n=3169). The data for AY 2022 (n=1115) is reserved for the actual evaluation of the predictive models that are going to be built.

Common data features for the models include the school year, faculty identifier number, school code, program code, and the computed faculty evaluation index value which corresponds to the categorical interpretations in Table 1. Model 1 consists of the following features: Effectiveness Of Teachers (EOT), Online Course Management (OCM), Effectiveness Of Courseware (EOC), Promotion Of Openness (POO), Promotion Of Deep Learning (PODL), and their average (LAVG), with 3,169 valid observations following the EDA.

Model 2 includes the following features: Average Planning and Preparation (avgPaP), Average Classroom Environment (avgCE), Average Instruction (avgI), Average Professional Responsibilities (avgPR), and Average of all Peer Assessments (avgPAI), totaling to 1,888 valid observations.

In Model 3, features from Models 1 and 2 are combined, with their averages computed, resulting in 3,169 observations. It is worth noting that the average is only computed when both student and peer evaluations are present. Otherwise, the value from Model 1 is utilized.

Table 1. Categorical Interpretation

Category	Criteria	Interpretation
1	1.0 to 1.99	Poor
2	2.0 to 2.99	Needs Improvement
3	3.0 to 3.33	Satisfactory
4	3.34 to 3.66	Very satisfactory
5	3.67 to 4.00	Outstanding

**Model Building.** The Python code in Appendix A is used to build and train the ML model using the GBM, RF, SVM, XGBoost, NB, and DT algorithms for each of the data models stated above. The dataset is loaded first using pandas. The dataset is split into features (x) and the target variable (y). The categorical labels are then transformed into consecutive integers using the LabelEncoder class of the scikit-learn library (Great Learning Team. 2023; Pedregosa et al., 2011).

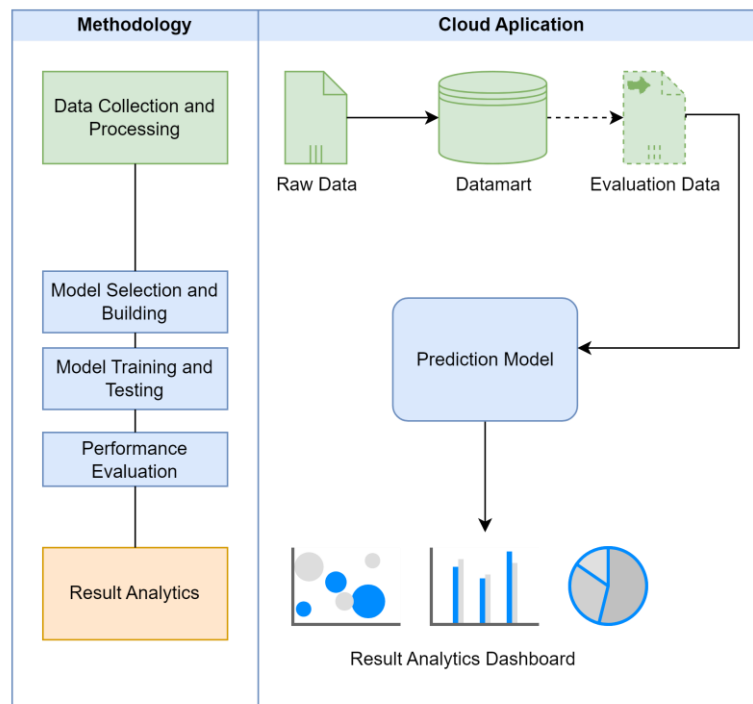
The dataset is then split into training and testing sets, allotting eighty percent (80%) for training and the remaining twenty percent (20%) for testing (Brownlee, 2020; Galarnyk, 2022). Tokuç (2021) explains that there is no universal guideline for dividing a dataset into training and testing sets. However, for relatively small datasets ( $n < 10,000$ ), a 70:30 split is commonly used, while for very large datasets ( $n \geq 1,000,000$ ), a 99:1 split is preferred.

Using the different ML algorithms, the classifier model is created and trained using the training data. Once the model is trained, predictions are made on the test set, which evaluates the model's performance on unseen data. Additionally, the trained model is saved using the pickle module (Selvaraj, 2023; GeeksforGeeks, 2023), allowing for future deployment and use in predicting faculty effectiveness based on similar datasets.

In the evaluation stage, several performance metrics are computed to assess the model's effectiveness. These metrics include accuracy, precision, recall, and F1 score, which provide insights into the model's ability to correctly classify instances of faculty effectiveness. The accuracy metric indicates the proportion of correctly classified instances, while precision measures the proportion of true positive predictions among all positive predictions. Recall calculates the proportion of true positive predictions among all actual positive instances, and the F1 score represents the harmonic mean of precision and recall, offering a balanced assessment of the model's performance. By evaluating these metrics, researchers can gauge the different model's effectiveness in predicting faculty effectiveness and identify areas for improvement or refinement in the modeling process.

The code in Appendix B implements a predictive model to forecast the Faculty Effectiveness Index (FEI) for the next five years using the pre-trained classifier models. Initially, the code loads the trained model and any preprocessing steps required, such as label encoding, from the respective files. Subsequently, it loads the reserved AY 2022 dataset containing features for prediction.

After loading the dataset, the code separates the target variable 'FEI' from the features and applies label encoding to the target variable if necessary. The prediction process using the pickled model is carried out in a loop for the next five years. Within the loop, predictions are made using the loaded model on the provided features. These predictions are then decoded from their encoded form using the label encoder and stored in a dictionary structure, which maintains the original faculty identifier number, school year, actual FEI value for AY 2022, and the predicted FEIs for the next five years. Once the predictions are made for all the years, the results are organized into a DataFrame and saved to a CSV file for further analysis and reference. All these operations are done through Google Drive.



**Fig. 1. Methodology and its corresponding application in the cloud**

### 3. Results

#### *Model Evaluation*

The modeling phase involves using various machine learning techniques on the dataset to predict faculty effectiveness and future performance based on current activities and accomplishments. This classification problem seeks to determine if a faculty member will have a failing or outstanding performance.

The table presents the performance metrics for three different models (Model 1, Model 2, and Model 3) with varying features (11, 10, and 17 features, respectively) across multiple machine learning algorithms (XGBoost, Random Forest (RF), Support Vector Machine (SVM), Gradient Boosting Machine (GBM), Naive Bayes (NB), and Decision Tree (DT)). Each model has been evaluated on a dataset consisting of 3,169 observations, and their performance is assessed using accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score.

For Model 1, with 11 features, XGBoost, GBM, and DT achieved perfect scores across all metrics (Accuracy, Precision, Recall, F1-score) with a value of 1.000, indicating flawless classification performance while RF also performs exceptionally well, with slightly lower but still near-perfect scores of 0.998 for all metrics. Lastly, SVM and NB show significantly lower performance, with

both achieving an Accuracy of 0.514, Precision of 0.264, Recall of 0.514, and an F1-score of 0.349. The evaluation of the last two algorithms indicates that they are not effective on this feature set.

In Model 2 with 10 features, XGBoost maintains its perfect performance across all metrics (1.000). GBM slightly drops in performance with Precision only remained at 1.000. For RF, it remains strong with high metrics of 0.998 for all, like its performance in Model 1. Finally, SVM and NB show marginal improvement compared to Model 1, with an Accuracy of 0.568, Precision of 0.322, Recall of 0.568, and F1-score of 0.411. However, they still perform poorly relative to the other algorithms.

Regarding Model 3 with 17 features, XGBoost maintained a perfect score across all metrics, demonstrating consistency with its performance starting from Model 1. GBM and DT also performed a perfect score, however their performance is not consistent with the previous models. For RF, it performs almost as well as the previous models, with only a slight dip in performance with 0.997 across all metrics. Lastly, SVM and NB show further improvement over their performance in Models 1 and 2, with an Accuracy of 0.585, Precision of 0.342, Recall of 0.585, and F1-score of 0.432. Despite the improvement, their performance remains significantly lower than the other algorithms.

Across all three models, XGBoost, GBM, and DT consistently deliver the best performance, achieving nearly perfect or perfect scores across all evaluation metrics. RF also performs exceptionally well, though slightly behind the top three algorithms. In contrast, SVM and NB consistently underperform relative to the other algorithms, though their performance improves slightly as the number of features increases from Model 1 to Model 3. This suggests that while XGBoost, GBM, and DT are robust to variations in feature sets, SVM and NB struggle to achieve competitive performance in this context. This shows that XGBoost is the best performing ML algorithm since it consistently maintained perfect scores across all metrics, showing stable and reliable performance beginning with Model 1.

**Table 2. Model Evaluations**

Model Name	Algorithm	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1-score
<b>Model 1</b> 3169 observations 11 features	XGBoost	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	RF	0.998	0.998	0.998	0.998
	SVM	0.514	0.264	0.514	0.349
	GBM	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	NB	0.514	0.264	0.514	0.349
	DT	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
<b>Model 2</b> 3169 observations 10 features	XGBoost	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	RF	0.998	0.998	0.998	0.998
	SVM	0.568	0.322	0.568	0.411
	GBM	0.998	1.000	0.998	0.999
	NB	0.568	0.322	0.568	0.411
	DT	0.998	1.000	0.998	0.999
<b>Model 3</b> 3169 observations 17 features	XGBoost	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	RF	0.997	0.997	0.997	0.997
	SVM	0.585	0.342	0.585	0.432
	GBM	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
	NB	0.585	0.342	0.585	0.432
	DT	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000

## Prediction Evaluation

Table 3 compares the performance of various machine learning algorithms across three different models. Each model has a different number of observations and features.

In Model 1, XGBoost, RF, and GBM achieved perfect accuracy (100%), while SVM and NB performed poorly with around 81% accuracy and DT made only one wrong prediction.

For Model 2, RF achieved 100% accuracy, followed closely by XGBoost, DT, and GBM with over 98% accuracy. SVM improved significantly to 97.56%, while NB remained the weakest performer at 77.97%.

In Model 3, XGBoost, GBM, and DT achieved perfect accuracy, with RF very close behind at 99.91%. SVM and NB again showed the weakest performance, though SVM improved compared to Model 1.

Overall, XGBoost is the most consistently high-performing algorithm across different models, showing near-perfect accuracy in various scenarios and minimal errors overall. RF and GBM also performed well but did not match XGBoost's stability and effectiveness. SVM and NB, on the other hand, generally underperformed, with SVM showing some improvement but still lagging. This analysis highlights XGBoost's robustness and adaptability across different datasets and feature sets, making it the best choice for these classification tasks.

**Table 3. Model Prediction Accuracy**

Model Name	Algorithm	# of wrong predictions	%
<b>Model 1</b> 3169 observations 11 features	XGBoost	0	100.00
	RF	0	100.00
	SVM	600	81.07
	GBM	0	100.00
	NB	601	81.04
	DT	1	99.97
<b>Model 2</b> 1888 observations 10 features	XGBoost	1	99.95
	RF	0	100.00
	SVM	46	97.56
	GBM	29	98.46
	NB	416	77.97
	DT	1	99.95
<b>Model 3</b> 3169 observations 17 features	XGBoost	0	100.00
	RF	3	99.91
	SVM	384	87.88
	GBM	0	100.00
	NB	385	79.61
	DT	0	100.00

## 4. Discussion

The primary goal of this study is to connect traditional educational assessments with advanced data science methods, aiming to enable data-driven decision-making and policy development by applying and assessing the most accurate machine learning algorithms for predicting faculty effectiveness.

Across all three models, XGBoost, GBM, and DT consistently delivered top performance, achieving nearly perfect scores. RF also performed very well, though slightly behind these three. SVM and NB consistently underperformed but showed some improvements as the number of features increased. XGBoost demonstrated exceptional stability and effectiveness, maintaining perfect scores and minimal errors across various scenarios. This analysis highlights XGBoost's robustness and adaptability, making it the most reliable choice for these classification tasks, with RF and GBM also performing well but not matching XGBoost's consistency. These findings align with the study reported by Asselman A, et al. (2021) and Çakıt and Dağdeviren, (2021). However, these findings contradict the study by Vijayalakshmi, V, et al., (2020), which reported that (SVM) achieved high accuracy in classification tasks.

Despite the strong findings of this study, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results. XGBoost's superior performance suggests it should be the primary choice for similar prediction tasks in terms of Algorithm Selection. Its consistency across different models implies it's robust to variations in data size and feature count. While its extremely high accuracy is promising, it may be worth investigating potential overfitting, especially if the test set is small or not representative of real-world data. Additionally, a deeper examination of how well these models perform on unseen data is advised. This could be achieved by employing cross-validation techniques and evaluating the models' performance on independent datasets not used in their training. Such additional testing would help confirm the models' ability to maintain their high accuracy when applied to new, diverse data, ensuring their practical usefulness beyond the initial dataset. Also, the variation in performance across models with different numbers of features suggests that feature selection and engineering play crucial roles in model performance. Lastly, the notable performance difference between the top algorithms and SVM or NB highlights the critical importance of algorithm selection. Overall, these findings could guide future machine learning projects in similar domains, guiding algorithm choice, model development strategies, and resource allocation in predictive modeling tasks.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings from these machine learning algorithm performance comparisons could have several significant impacts on HEIs faculty effectiveness. The high accuracy of XGBoost algorithm suggests that HEIs could develop highly reliable models to predict faculty effectiveness. This could lead to more data-driven decision-making in faculty management and development. HEIs could also identify areas where individual faculty members might need improvement before issues arise, allowing for targeted and personalized professional development programs with accurate predictive models. By predicting faculty effectiveness, institutions could optimize resource allocation, ensuring that support and development resources are directed where they're most needed or likely to have the greatest impact. These highly accurate models could also help identify potential issues in teaching effectiveness early on, allowing for timely interventions and support to improve faculty performance. Additionally, the insights gained from these models could inform hiring and promotion processes, helping institutions identify candidates most likely to be effective educators.



By understanding the factors that contribute to faculty effectiveness, HEIs could refine curricula and promote teaching methods that are most likely to lead to positive outcomes. These predictive models could contribute to more comprehensive and accurate institutional performance metrics, potentially influencing rankings and funding. Implementing these data-driven approaches could foster a culture of continuous improvement among faculty, encouraging ongoing professional development and adaptation to best practices. Ultimately, it's important to note that while these machine learning models show promise, their application in real-world educational settings would require careful implementation, ongoing validation, and integration with human expertise to ensure fair and effective use in improving faculty effectiveness.

Given that XGBoost achieved near-perfect accuracy, it should be preferred over other algorithms for its computational efficiency, especially for large-scale applications. For model reliability, the high accuracy of XGBoost indicates that highly reliable predictive models can be built for this problem, potentially leading to more confident decision-making based on these predictions.

### ***Declaration on the use of AI in the writing process***

During the preparation of this work the authors used ChatGPT to enhance readability and refine the language. After using this tool/service, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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## Appendix A. Model Building, Training, and Testing

### ## Model Building Template

```
import pandas as pd
from sklearn.model_selection import train_test_split

# Making a pickled model for model 1 XGBoost
from xgboost import XGBClassifier

# Making a pickled model for model 1 Using Random Forest
from sklearn.ensemble import RandomForestClassifier

# Making a pickled model for model 1 Using SVM
from sklearn.svm import SVC

# Making a pickled model for model 1 Using GBoosting Machines
from sklearn.ensemble import GradientBoostingClassifier
```

```

# Making a pickled model for model 1 Using Naive Bayes
from sklearn.naive_bayes import GaussianNB

# Making a pickled model for model 1 Using Decision Tree
from sklearn.tree import DecisionTreeClassifier

from sklearn.preprocessing import LabelEncoder
from sklearn.metrics import accuracy_score, precision_score, recall_score, f1_score
import joblib

# Load the dataset
df = pd.read_csv("Model1.csv")

# Remove records where FEI values are 0
df = df[df['FEI'] != 0]

# Assuming 'FEI' is your target variable and you want to use all other columns as features
X = df.drop(columns=['FEI']) # Features
y = df['FEI'] # Target variable

# Encode categorical labels to numerical values
label_encoder = LabelEncoder()
y = label_encoder.fit_transform(y)

# Split the data into training and test sets
X_train, X_test, y_train, y_test = train_test_split(X, y, test_size=0.2, random_state=42)

# These are the different ML algorithms

# Create and train the XGBoost model with an evaluation metric
model = XGBClassifier(objective='multi:softmax',
num_class=len(label_encoder.classes_))
eval_set = [(X_train, y_train), (X_test, y_test)] # Set for evaluation
model.fit(X_train, y_train, eval_set=eval_set, eval_metric=["mlogloss", "merror"],
verbose=True)

# Create and train the Random Forest model
model_rf = RandomForestClassifier() # Create a Random Forest classifier
model_rf.fit(X_train, y_train) # Train the model

# Create and train the SVM model
model_svm = SVC() # Create a SVM classifier
model_svm.fit(X_train, y_train) # Train the model

# Create and train the GBM model
model_gbm = GradientBoostingClassifier() # Create a GBM classifier
model_gbm.fit(X_train, y_train) # Train the model

# Make predictions on the test set
y_pred = model.predict(X_test)

```

```

# Calculate evaluation metrics
accuracy = accuracy_score(y_test, y_pred)
precision = precision_score(y_test, y_pred, average='weighted')
recall = recall_score(y_test, y_pred, average='weighted')
f1 = f1_score(y_test, y_pred, average='weighted')
#roc_auc = roc_auc_score(y_test, y_pred)

print("Evaluation Metrics: XGBoost") #these are changed per algorithm
print(f'Accuracy: {accuracy}')
print(f'Precision: {precision}')
print(f'Recall: {recall}')
print(f'F1 Score: {f1}')
#print(f'ROC-AUC Score: {roc_auc}')

# Save the trained model and preprocessing steps
joblib.dump(model, 'm1_model_xgb.pkl') #these are changed per algorithm
joblib.dump(label_encoder, 'm1_label_encoder_xgb.pkl') #these are changed per algorithm

```

## Appendix B. Generating Prediction for each Model and Algorithm

```

## Prediction Model Template
import pandas as pd
import joblib

#XGB Prediction for 5 years
from xgboost import XGBClassifier
# Random Forest Prediction for 5 years
from sklearn.ensemble import RandomForestClassifier
# SVM Prediction for 5 years
from sklearn.svm import SVC
# GBM Prediction for 5 years
from sklearn.ensemble import GradientBoostingClassifier
# Naive Bayes Prediction for 5 years
from sklearn.naive_bayes import GaussianNB
# Decision Tree Prediction for 5 years
from sklearn.tree import DecisionTreeClassifier

# Load the trained model
model = joblib.load('m1_model_xgb.pkl') # filename will depend on the model

# Load any necessary preprocessing steps (e.g., label encoder)
label_encoder = joblib.load('m1_label_encoder_xgb.pkl') # filename will depend on the model

# Load the new dataset you want to make predictions on
new_data = pd.read_csv('Model1_2022only.csv') # this is the 2022 data

# Remove records where FEI values are 0
new_data = new_data[new_data['FEI'] != 0]

# Assuming 'FEI' is your target variable, remove it from the new data
X_new = new_data.drop(columns=['FEI']) # Features

```

```

# Apply the same label encoding to the target variable (if needed)
y_new = new_data['FEI'] # Target variable
y_new_encoded = label_encoder.transform(y_new)

# Create a DataFrame to store predicted FEI for the next 5 years
predicted_results = {
    'FID': new_data['FID'],
    'School Year': new_data['SchoolYear'],
    'Original_FEI': new_data['FEI']
}

# Predict FEI for the next 5 years
for year in range(1, 6):
    # Make predictions for the current year
    predictions = model.predict(X_new)

    # Decode the label-encoded predictions back to their original labels
    predicted_labels = label_encoder.inverse_transform(predictions)

    # Store predictions for the current year
    column_name = f'Year_{year}'
    predicted_results[column_name] = predicted_labels

    # Update X_new for the next year prediction (assuming it's the same data for each year)
    X_new = new_data.drop(columns=['FEI']) # Update features for the next year

# Create a DataFrame with the predicted results
results_df = pd.DataFrame(predicted_results)

# Print the results to the screen
print("Model 1 Predicted Results:")
print(results_df)

# Save the results to an output file
results_df.to_csv('1M_2022_predictions.csv', index=False)

```

# Designing a Collaborative Strategy for the Promotion of an Intensified Research Culture in Divine Word College of Legazpi

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## ABSTRACT

Research enables various sectors to identify issues, evaluate policies, and craft evidence-based solutions paramount to economic and social growth. In the academe, research helps faculty to contribute to the body of knowledge in their field. Divine Word College of Legazpi (DWCL,) a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Bicol Region, upholds the three-fold function in education—instruction, research, and extension, aligned with the Commission on Higher Education’s (CHED’s) mandate to foster a robust research culture in HEIs. DWCL believes that research is essential to the institution's academic mission of advancing the frontier of knowledge. Despite the support it gets from the administration, DWCL faces the challenge of sustaining high faculty research engagement. A mixed-methods research design was adopted to determine the DWCL faculty's predisposition to research, their research interests and their perceptions of the barriers to research engagement. The study found that DWCL faculty are highly interested in conducting research but face time constraints, heavy workload, and limited resources. While the faculty expressed a need for skill development in research writing, they seek for a more facilitative environment that recognizes research contributions and foster collaboration. The challenge for higher research engagement can be addressed through designing programs that focus on research methodology selection, data analysis, and writing skills. By creating a conducive environment, developing their skills, and collaborating effectively, DWCL can cultivate a stronger research culture that can lead to a more engaged faculty.

**Keywords:** *collaborative strategy, research engagement, barriers, promotion*

## Introduction

Research is essential across all fields of study. Educational institutions, businesses, and industries, both public and private, have all been influenced by research. Many of modern conveniences enjoyed by society are direct results of research from various disciplines (Garcia & Reganit, 2010).

The World Bank report (2021) underlines the idea that data and research are the backbone of strong economic policies. Research enables various sectors to identify issues, evaluate policies, and craft evidence-based solutions paramount to economic and social growth. Universities steer this effort by conducting research that equips future generations with the skills needed for an innovation-based economy (Smith, 2006).

Several studies highlight the benefits of a robust research culture in higher education. Cutler et al. (2022) demonstrate that research addresses challenges in education, evidence-based teaching decisions, and empowers educators. Matias & Saludarez (2016) posit that research enrich teachers’ effective disciplinary instruction thereby contributing to generations of new knowledge in their discipline. Roman (2021) mentions that when HEIs have evident research outcomes, the quality of instruction is justified and sustainability of extension services increases.

The Philippine government, through Republic Act 7722, mandates Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines to actively engage in research and innovation. Divine Word College of Legazpi (DWCL) as a higher education institution (HEI) manifests this commitment by upholding the three-fold educational

function of instruction, research, and extension, aligned to the CHED mandate of fostering a robust research culture.

However, establishing a thriving research culture is challenging. The study of Pilongo (2022) showed that the level of difficulty in research writing among faculty members in the University of Bohol was moderately difficult. Amidst calls for research involvement among teachers of HEIs, response has been minimal (Tarrayo et. al. 2021). DWCL faces the same challenge, despite the support from the administration.

This study aimed to investigate the research culture at DWCL and to develop strategies for promoting a more research-intensive environment. The research questions addressed are; (1) What are the academic research interests of the DWCL faculty indicated by their: a.) participation in the in-house training; b.) trainings attended, c.) satisfaction with capability training, and d.) training references? (2) What personal and institutional factors are perceived by faculty members to have hindered their research productivity? (3) What strategic plan can be crafted in the promotion of an intensified research culture in DWCL along; a.) enhancing research skills and productivity, b.) collaboration with non-teaching staff, and c.) creating a supportive research environment?

## Methodology

Using a mixed-methods research design the researcher conducted survey of tenured and probationary faculty members, delving into their research interests, attitudes, and perceived barriers, both personal and institutional, to research engagement. A modified questionnaire, adapted from the published study of Soe (2019) and from an online article by Heng et al., (2020) was used to collect data. The instrument consists of three parts: Part 1 investigates training participation and satisfaction and their preferences for future training; part 2) investigates the perceived motivations and barriers to research productivity, and part 3 explores faculty's suggestions for strategies in intensifying research engagement. Experts evaluated the survey questionnaire, refined, was pilot-tested it involving six faculty members of the University of Sto. Tomas-Legazpi.

Qualitative data were collected through an in-depth interview involving some school research council, randomly selected using a multi-method approach. Two groups of randomly selected faculty members participated in the focus group discussions (FGDs). Some individual interviews were conducted in-person and online, based on the participants' preference. Analysis of the interviews yielded key themes that were used for analysis of the survey data. This integrated approach provided understanding of the current research landscape at DWCL and inform the development of practical strategies to foster a research-driven environment.

## The Respondents

The respondents were the full-time tenured faculty members of the DWCL and those on probationary positions from the basic education (n=68), and the college department, including the graduate school (n=82.) A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed, 107 responses of which were retrieved, registering a retrieval rate of 71%. Responses came from 56 faculty members in basic education and 51 from the college department. The retrieval rate of 71% is deemed representative of the prevailing sentiment of DWCL faculty regarding research engagement (Mavs Open Press)

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Trainings attended

In this section the respondents were asked to indicate the research capability trainings they had attended. These options were presented separately for each school as shown in the Tables 1 and 2. Participants could select one or more training programs that they had participated in.

Table 1 shows that the three most attended trainings by the respondents in the basic education department were *Workshop on Action Research* (25%) *Seminar on Research Writing* (23%) and *Orientation on IMRAD*

Format (15%.)

Table 1: Training attended by the faculty of basic education

Trainings Attended	Frequency	Percent
Writeshop on Action Research	27	2
Orientation on IMRAD Format	16	15
Seminar on Research Writing	24	23
Workshop on Teaching Research for Senior High School (SHS) Faculty	4	4
Others	2	2

This revealed a strong interest among faculty members in enhancing their abilities to conduct research. Only 4% attended the “workshop specifically designed for faculty teaching research subjects at the SHS level. This seminar was requested by the SHS department for their faculty members handling research subject. Not all faculty members in the school were invited. There were two respondents who selected “others.” However, they did not indicate the training.

Table 2: Trainings attended by the college department

Trainings attended	Frequency	Percent
1. Orientation on IMRAD Format	26	24
2. Workshop Training on Google Applications	9	8
3. Training-workshop on Writing Proposal	19	18
4. Writeshop on Research Introduction	25	23
5. Seminar-Writeshop on Academic Writing and Publishing	22	21
6. others	1	1

Table 2 shows that the training most participated in by the respondents in the college department was "Orientation on IMRAD Format," 24%. The participation rate for the "Workshop Training on Google Applications" was relatively low (8%). One factor for this low turn-out of participants was the fact that the training was not offered across the institution. The training was requested by the School of Engineering and Computer Studies, also attended by selected non-teaching personnel. The participation rates for the other trainings were fairly similar. “Writeshop on Research Introduction” had 23%; “Seminar-Writeshop on Academic Writing and Publishing” and “Training-Workshop on Writing Proposal” had 21% and 18% participants, respectively.

This data can determine areas for future training programs to help capacitate faculty in research writing. Two of the respondents in the FGD mentioned that if writing skill is poor, it is very difficult to do research. If given an opportunity, respondents expressed their interest to attend further training to improve their writing capability.

### ***Participation in DWCL Trainings***

This sub-section highlights the intensified research culture in the DWCL showing a positive trend in the training programs. Data revealed that 67% responded "Yes" to participation in DWCL training programs in the past five years while 30% responded negatively. The small percentage, 2%, did not reply. However, the data suggest a strong commitment among the faculty members to develop their research writing capabilities.

Table 3: Participation DWCL Trainings

Participation	Frequency	Percent
Yes	72	67
No	33	31

Did not answer	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The respondents in the 1<sup>st</sup> FGD group affirmed that since they are more inclined to working with numbers, they needed workshops to improve their writing skills. This sounds positive. It suggests that when equipped with enough skills there is a probability of increased or more research engagement. Faculty can accomplish more research if they have enough competencies specifically in processing and procedures (Roman, 2021.)

### ***Faculty Satisfaction with Capability Training***

The respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the capability training programs they have attended. The survey employed a Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied) to gauge faculty satisfaction with the institution's capability training programs. Table 4 shows only a small percentage of respondents reporting low levels of satisfaction. Only 6% indicated "somewhat dissatisfied" and one faculty member "very dissatisfied." On the positive side, a considerable number of faculty members (16%) expressed high satisfaction. However, a significant portion (23%) is only "somewhat satisfied." The largest group (40%) answered "satisfied." Though dissatisfaction exists, it appears that satisfaction is relatively high.

Table 4: Training satisfaction of the respondents

Scale	Frequency	Percent
1 very dissatisfied	1	.9
2 Somewhat dissatisfied	6	6
3 Somewhat satisfied	25	23
4 Satisfied	43	40
5 Very satisfied	17	16
TOTAL	92	86
Did not answer	15	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It can be inferred that the institutions' initiative in providing faculty members the opportunities to develop their research writing capability was found by the respondents beneficial. However, it came out that though they were satisfied of the training they admitted time is insufficient due to heavy workload.

A study by Phuong, et al., (2017) highlighted that *"the amount of workload that teachers need to take over keeps them busy with their teaching. Therefore, they lack ample time for conducting research."* Despite these challenges, HEIs have to uphold their significant role in driving a nation's research and innovation. The DWCL faces this challenge by launching initiatives in intensifying a research-driven culture. The college president, Fr. Nielo Cantilado, (2024) pointed out that the institution is seriously taking strides to capacitate faculty and even non-teaching personnel.

## **2. Academic Research Interest of DWCL Faculty**

The DWCL faculty's interest in research was measured along a 5-point scale where '1' is "not at all interested" and '5' "highly interested." Data reveal that the range of interests among faculty members on the positive extends from 'interested' (44%), 'very interested' (21%) to 'highly interested' (8%). Altogether, a total of 78 out of 107 (73%) indicated positive predisposition towards research, suggesting that the institution can look to robust research productivity in the years ahead. Faculty members manifest motivation to do research. Only those 'somewhat interested' (18%), or "not at all interested" (8%) need to be motivated.



Table 5: Faculty's interest in conducting research

Rating scale	Verbal interpretation	Frequency	Percent
1	Not at all interested	9	8
2	Somewhat interested	19	18
3	Interested	47	44
4	Very interested	22	21
5	Highly interested	9	8
	Did not answer	1	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100</b>

(N=107) Weighted Mean =3.03 (Interested)

That the majority of the faculty are interested in undertaking research (Wtd Mean = 3.03) is a promising outlook. The only drawback is that many feel that their confidence in writing skill is low. This surfaced during the FGD conducted. Most admitted that their writing ability and resources are insufficient. What they meant of this deficiency is that they lack funds for data gathering and for literature search. They narrated that looking for sources for information, people and materials, is another impediment, barring them from venturing into research. This concern confirms that limited resources hinder research undertaking (Phuong, et al., 2017.)

### **Faculty Training Preferences**

Lists of possible topics for workshops were given to identify the respondents' preferences for future trainings. From the predetermined choices, "statistical methods and data analysis" emerged as the respondents' top choice, (55%). This denotes a strong interest in developing analytical skills, crucial for conducting research. The 2<sup>nd</sup> chosen topic was, "grant writing and research proposal development" (48%). This indicates desire among faculty members to enhance their ability to secure research funding.

Table 6: Faculty training preferences

Indicators	Frequency	Percent	Rank
1. Grant writing and research proposal development.	51	48	2nd
2. Statistical methods and data analysis.	59	55	1st
3. Research misconduct and ethics.	24	22	5th
4. Scholarly publishing and open access.	30	28	4th
5. Using technology for research	46	43	3rd
6. Others	1	1	6th

(N = 107)

The third topic chosen was "using technology for research", (42%) that is, use of research software, data management tools." This reflects the faculty's realization of the growing importance of using technology in research. The "Scholarly publishing and open access" (28%) and "research misconduct and ethics" (22%) ranked 4th and 5th, respectively, revealing the faculty's need for guidance in research publication. Majority of the FGDs participants expressed the need for "more seminars and capability training." They acknowledged that trainings on writing introduction, methodology, conclusions and recommendations would help improve their writing capability. Trainings on methodology such as surveys, interviews, experiments, and application of statistical methods like ANOVA, regression analysis, etc., were also mentioned.

This reflects that faculty members are interested to improve their research capability. The study of Matias & Saludarez (2016) revealed that the faculty members' research involvement needed institution's support. Financial reward and merit system, research capability programs and institutional policies were found to be major contributory factors. DWCL is on the right track in setting the research goal of intensified research culture as one of its key result areas (KRA) in its Strategic Plan 2022-2027.

### 3. Factors Influencing DWCL Faculty's Research Engagement

#### 3. a. Perceived factors influencing research engagement

The factors that the faculty perceived to influence their research engagement were categorized by the researcher into personal and institutional. Data presented in this sub-section came from the survey and the FGD conducted.

##### *Personal Factors.*

As shown in Table 7, "time management" emerged as the topmost factor, (60%). This shows that faculty members consider effective time management skills as crucial to successful research endeavors. Ranked 2 is possession of "research skills" seen by many (54%) as essential in research undertaking. This highlights the importance faculty place on having strong basic skills in research. Keeping a "work-life balance" ranked 3rd (49%), indicating that faculty members recognize the challenge of balancing research pursuits with other professional and personal commitments.

Also perceived as influencing factors in research participation mentioned by a sizable number of the faculty-respondents were "motivation" (47%), ranked 4th and feeling of "self- efficacy or confidence" in undertaking research which many (41%) admitted they lack, ranked 5th. These findings underscore the importance of strengthening the faculty's intrinsic drive and confidence in their capacity to do research.

Results of the FGD confirmed that "time management" is a huge challenge to the faculty. They unanimously claimed that it is a struggle for them to balance doing research and performing teaching-related responsibilities. Further, some respondents mentioned that after a day's teaching, they feel too exhausted to still do research. "It is so enervating" they remarked. This claim is supported by the second FGD participants. Majority said that heavy teaching loads leave them little time and energy for research undertakings. "Work-life balance" surfaced as another factor. Respondents shared the difficulty of balancing research endeavors with teaching and related-work, personal and family concerns. However Pilongo (2022) emphasized that research productivity is essential for hiring, tenure, and promotion, hence, must be done.

Table 7: Perceived factors influencing research engagement (N=107)

	Indicators	Frequency	Percent	Rank
<b>Personal factors</b>	Motivation	50	47	4 <sup>th</sup>
	Time Management	65	60	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Research Skills	57	54	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Self-Efficacy and Confidence	44	41	5 <sup>th</sup>
	Work-Life Balance	52	49	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Others	4	4	7 <sup>th</sup>
	None of the above	15	4	6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Institutional Factors</b>	Workload and Teaching Load	66	62	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Research Support and Resources	55	51	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Collaboration and Collegiality	29	27	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Performance Evaluation and Recognition	21	20	4 <sup>th</sup>
	Institutional Culture and Infrastructure	15	14	5 <sup>th</sup>
	Others	2	2	7 <sup>th</sup>
	None of the above	10	9.3	6 <sup>th</sup>

##### *Institutional Factors.*

This sub-section shows the respondents' perception of factors that influence the conduct of research in the institution. Heavy "workload and teaching load" is the predominant factor mentioned by majority of the respondents (62%). This was followed by "research support and resources" cited by 51%. Majority of the faculty members believed that an adequate research support and resources such as provision for funding and access to research facilities is crucial to research engagement. "Collaboration and collegiality" (27%) and "performance evaluation and recognition" (20%) were factors mentioned as well. Gaikwad (2021) pointed out that environmental and personal characteristics are known for their contribution to research productivity of faculty among HEIs.

From the qualitative data collected, the top factors that could motivate the faculty to do research is workload. Although heavy workload could hinder research writing, it can serve as a positive factor. According to one of the respondents, affirmed by others in the FGD, an additional workload with corresponding incentives is encouraging. A project fund is an additional factor to incentives. This implies that though teachers are loaded with teaching tasks, they can set time if well-funded. They quipped that *"if the price is right, we'll do it right."* Abdelazeem et.al (2022) claimed there is a significant increase in the rate of responses from participants when offered small monetary incentives. Likewise, widely acknowledging research achievements can motivate faculty.

### **3.b. Factors perceived as hindering faculty research engagement**

To explore further faculty engagement in research writing at DWCL, this sub-section clarifies their perceived hindering factors.

#### *Personal Factors.*

Table 8 shows the predetermined factors by the respondents hindering research engagement. "Time constraints" emerged as the prominent barrier (67%). "Heavy workloads" followed closely (65%), and "Work-life balance challenges" ranked 3rd. A significant number of faculty members (34%) identified "perceived lack of skills or confidence in writing," as a hindrance and "lack of interest" placed 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> rank (30%).

Table 8: Perceived hindering factors in research engagement

	Indicators	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Personal Factors	Lack of interest	33	31	5 <sup>th</sup>
	Workload	69	65	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Time constraint	72	67	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Perceived lack of skills	36	34	4 <sup>th</sup>
	Work-life balance challenges	50	47	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Institutional Factors	Limited Resources	49	46	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Unfavorable Institutional Culture	21	20	5 <sup>th</sup>
	Unclear or unrewarding evaluation Systems	30	28	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Insufficient information of institutional research program	27	25	4 <sup>th</sup>
	Unsatisfied with institutional rewards	28	26	3 <sup>rd</sup>

#### *Institutional Factors.*

Data shows the respondents' perceived institutional factors for not conducting research. "Limited resources" ranked 1<sup>st</sup> (46%) and "unclear or unrewarding evaluation systems" ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> (28%). This could imply that faculty considers the research support in terms of research facilities, clear policies on faculty evaluation is a huge factor to motivate their research engagement. With very minimal difference in preference are "unsatisfied institutional rewards" "unaware insufficient information of institutional research program"

ranked 3rd, 4th and 5th (26, 25 and 20%) respectively. This denotes that faculty members need to be cognizant of the incentives and rewarding policy of the institution.

This section analyzes the reasons faculty reported for not conducting research. “Limited resources” emerged as the biggest perceived barrier (49%). This suggests a need for increased support in terms of research facilities, equipment, or funding. Ranked 2nd is “unclear or unrewarding evaluation systems” (28%). This could mean that faculty felt that the current system for evaluating faculty performance does not adequately recognize research contributions. This implies the need for clearer guidelines and greater weight on research achievements in promotion and tenure decisions. “Unsatisfaction with institutional rewards” ranked 3rd (26%) and “unawareness or insufficient information of institutional program” (25%) were also cited as barriers to teachers’ participation in research. These factors highlight the need to improve communication and information about research support and incentives.

The study of Phuong, et al., (2017) mentioned five common factors that prevent teachers from conducting. These included non-collaborative school culture; limitations in teachers’ awareness, skills and knowledge and limited resource. The same could be some reasons that hinder DWCL faculty from doing research. Lack of awareness of the institution’s research incentives was confirmed during the FGDs. One group of seven respondents and another group of five respondents unanimously expressed they are not fully aware of the incentives program of the institution. In the individual interviews conducted, four out of seven respondents expressed that it is unclear to them how research engagement is evaluated for faculty ranking.

One criterion in determining “Outstanding Faculty” award conducted annually is research participation. This seems to be not widely known. This suggests the need for a review of the criteria for the outstanding faculty award. According to Smith et al., (2014) cited by Gaikwad (2021,) it is a must for faculty in HEIs to conduct research since it is considered crucial in applying for academic promotion. Moreover, teachers play a crucial role in driving educational reform and contributing to the nation's progress by addressing its pressing educational challenges through research. In Myanmar tertiary education, it is more urgent than ever for teachers to engage in research activities (Soe, 2019).

#### IV. Perceived Strategies in Fostering Research Productivity

To gain insights into how the institution can better support faculty in improving their research engagement, respondents were asked to select their top two preferred strategies in these three areas:

##### 4.a Faculty preferences for Enhancing Research Skills and Productivity.

Table 9 shows that among the pre-identified strategies, “organize workshops and training sessions” (73%) surfaced as top preference. This shows clearly the felt need of faculty for more training opportunities. It suggests that the faculty want to enhance their skills in research writing. “Offer specialized training programs” (60%) ranked 2nd. This preference for discipline-specific trainings indicates interest among faculty members to increase their research productivity by acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to efficiently conduct and contribute to research projects within their field. This preference is strengthened by a related preference of faculty, which is to “establish a mentorship program (53%) and “foster collaboration and mentorship” (49%) comes 3rd and 4th in rank.

Table 9: Perceived strategies in enhancing research skills and productivity

Strategies	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Organize workshops and training sessions (methodologies, data analysis, academic writing, and publication ethics)	78	73	1 <sup>st</sup>
Offer specialized training program focused on specific fields relevant to faculty and staff	64	60	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Establish a mentorship program	57	53	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Foster collaboration and mentorship	44	49	4 <sup>th</sup>
Highlight faculty research accomplishments	41	38	5 <sup>th</sup>

Preference for mentorship program indicates the faculty's need for guidance from experienced researchers. Pairing senior faculty with junior colleagues may be considered to facilitate collaboration between and among faculty members. "Highlight faculty achievements" (38%) was 5th in rank. This preference suggests that researchers value external validation of their work, which can enhance their professional credibility.

#### 4.b. Faculty preferences for collaboration with non-teaching staff

Table 10 reveals that DWCL faculty members prioritized strategies that involve increased access to resources and collaboration with non-teaching staff to promote research. The two top priorities that emerged were: "provide access to research resources and support staff" (61%) and "cross training and skill development" (51%). These indicate a strong desire for support. This suggests that faculty value the opportunity to work with non-teaching staff who possess specialized skills or expertise that complement their own. Collaborative projects could lead to robust research culture. This was greatly emphasized by the respondents in the FGDs conducted. Skillful partnership between teaching and non-teaching staff can be engaging. This can be realized through training programs on research methodology, data management, or co-authorship. "Internal knowledge-sharing platforms" (33%) and "setting regular meeting hours (29%) also emerged as preferences to promote collaboration between teaching and non-teaching staff.

Table 10: Perceived strategies in promoting collaboration between faculty and non-teaching staff

Strategies	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Provide access to research resources and support staff	65	61	1st
Cross-training and skills development	55	51	2nd
Joint research projects.	49	46	3rd
Internal knowledge-sharing platforms.	35	33	4th
Setting regular meeting/hours	31	29	5th

These aired preferences reveal a need for better communication channels within the institution. A preferred communication platform could facilitate sharing of research ideas, expertise, and ongoing projects, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange.

"Setting regular meeting" denotes a desire for some level of structured interaction between faculty and non-teaching staff. It could be helpful to do collaboration if members work together in a shared space at a designated time. Regular meetings could serve as a valuable platform for faculty members to collaborate on research projects, and discuss emerging challenges in their field.

#### 4.c Faculty preferences for creating a supportive research environment

This sub-section explores faculty preferences for creating a more supportive research environment at DWCL.

Table 11: Faculty preferences for creating a supportive research environment

Strategies	Frequency	Percent	Rank
Dedicated research time.	67	63	1st
Create a supportive culture for research	61	57	2nd
Improved access to resources	51	48	3rd
Grant awards and recognition programs	45	42	4th
Research culture "cafes"	44	41	5th

Ranked 1st and 2nd priorities are "Dedicated research time" (63%) and "Create a supportive culture for research" (57%). These preferred strategies highlight a desire for designated time for research to be included in the faculty schedules. The other three preferences were: "improved access to resources (48%); "grant awards and recognition programs" (42%); and putting up "research culture cafes".

The data showed that the faculty needed further a supportive research environment. Time constraints, workload, and perceived lack of emphasis on research emerge as the most significant concerns. Moreover, faculty value access to resources, recognition for their research contributions, and opportunities for collaboration. These factors also hinder research engagement of faculty which surfaced during the FGDs. The first group of participants in the FGD unanimously expressed that they feel heavily burdened by teaching and administrative duties, leaving limited time for research. Some faculty perceived that research is less valued compared to teaching. One expressed that if research would be well supported and acknowledged, more faculty would be encouraged. This study found that faculty research productivity is based on both individual and institutional support. Fostering a supportive culture through recognizing research achievements and encouraging collaboration could encourage research involvement. Further, recognition, research training and culture were found helpful institutional support (Gaikwad, 2021).

## Conclusions and Recommendation

The challenge for higher research engagement can be addressed through designing research capability training programs that focus on research methodology selection, data analysis, and writing skills. By creating a conducive environment, develop their research writing skills, and collaborate between teaching and non-teaching staff effectively, DWCL can cultivate a stronger research culture, that values and rewards research endeavors, leading to a more engaged and productive faculty.

Based on the data analysis and conclusions collected, the researcher proposes a strategic plan designed to address the challenges identified in the study and enhance the DWCL faculty's research capabilities and engagement. The strategic plan aims to foster a robust research culture within the institution, empowering faculty members to conduct impactful research that contributes in achieving institutional academic mission.

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# Exploring Trends and Preferences: A Bibliometric Analysis of College Students Choices

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the reading preferences of college students from two state universities in the Philippines and a university in Thailand. The primary aim is to identify trends in preferred readings, analyze popular genres and authors, and understand the factors influencing these preferences. Using a stratified random sampling technique, the research surveys 1,500 students from diverse academic disciplines, representing undergraduate and graduate levels across both countries. The results highlight distinct reading preferences, with Thai students favoring non-fiction and religious texts, while Philippine students lean towards fiction, particularly international authors. Cultural and academic factors significantly shape these preferences, illustrating the influence of local traditions and educational systems. The study provides practical insights for educators to develop reading materials and strategies that are culturally relevant and engaging for students in Southeast Asian higher education. The findings also emphasize the importance of addressing diverse student populations when considering curriculum design. Future research directions include exploring the role of digital media in reading habits and extending the study to other Southeast Asian countries.

**Keywords:** Reading preferences, preferred genres, cultural influences

## Introduction

Reading serves as a fundamental pillar of academic achievement and personal development, fostering critical thinking and expanding cultural awareness. In an increasingly globalized world, understanding the reading preferences of students is crucial for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers. The intersection of culture, identity, and literature significantly influences how individuals engage with texts, making it imperative to explore these dynamics within diverse educational settings.

This study focuses on college students from two state universities in the Philippines and a university in Thailand, seeking to investigate their reading preferences. Literature indicates that reading habits are often shaped by cultural and contextual factors, yet research on Southeast Asian students' reading preferences remains scarce. Existing studies have highlighted the role of cultural identity in shaping reading behaviors (Smith & Lee, 2023; Chang & Teoh, 2022), but a comprehensive examination comparing students from these two countries has not been thoroughly conducted.

By exploring the reading preferences of college students from the Philippines and Thailand, this research aims to contribute to the broader academic discourse on literacy and cultural identity. It seeks to identify prevailing genres, favored authors, and the cultural influences that shape students' literary choices. Ultimately, the findings will provide insights that can guide educators in developing curricula that reflect students' diverse interests and cultural backgrounds.

## Problem Statement

Despite the recognized importance of reading in academic success and cultural development, there is limited research on the specific reading preferences of college students in Southeast Asia. The lack of comparative studies addressing the reading habits of students from different cultural backgrounds further exacerbates this gap. Understanding the reading preferences of students from the Philippines and Thailand



is essential for promoting effective teaching strategies and fostering cross-cultural dialogue in educational settings. This study, therefore, seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the dominant genres and authors preferred by college students in the Philippines and Thailand?
2. How do cultural and academic factors influence these reading preferences?
3. What insights can be drawn from the comparative analysis of reading preferences between students from these two countries?

**Objectives of the Research**

The primary objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To identify the most preferred genres and authors among college students in the Philippines and Thailand.
2. To examine the cultural and academic factors that influence students' reading preferences.
3. To compare and contrast the reading preferences of college students from both countries and highlight the similarities and differences observed.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study is grounded in the framework of reader-response theory, which posits that a reader's interpretation of a text is shaped by their cultural background, personal experiences, and contextual influences (Rosenblatt, 1978). This theoretical perspective allows for a nuanced understanding of how cultural identities and societal contexts inform reading preferences among college students. Additionally, the study employs a bibliometric approach to analyze the quantitative data collected from surveys, facilitating a structured examination of reading trends.

**Methodology**

The study employed a quantitative research approach, utilizing a cross-sectional survey methodology to collect data on the reading preferences of 1,500 college students from two state universities in the Philippines and one university in Thailand. Stratified random sampling ensured a representative sample, considering demographic factors such as academic year, gender, and field of study.

Surveys were administered electronically and in-person, depending on logistical considerations. The survey instrument captured key variables, including favorite books, genres, authors, and factors influencing students' choices. Once collected, the data were analyzed using bibliometric techniques, facilitating the identification of patterns and trends across the three institutions.

**Findings**

The study's findings reveal distinct differences in the reading preferences of Filipino and Thai college students, shaped by their cultural contexts. Table 1 summarizes the reading preferences of college students from the Philippines and Thailand, highlighting the most popular genres, authors, and the influences on their reading choices and an overall comparison.

Country	Most Popular Genre	Second Most Popular Genre	Most Preferred Authors
Philippines	Contemporary Fiction (40%)	Mystery/Thriller (25%)	Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Bob Ong
Thailand	Historical Fiction (35%)	Fantasy/Sci-Fi (30%)	Haruki Murakami, J.K. Rowling

The data presented in Table 1 illustrates the distinct preferences among Filipino and Thai students. Filipino students demonstrate a clear affinity for contemporary fiction, reflecting their engagement with narratives

that resonate with their cultural experiences. In contrast, Thai students show a stronger preference for historical fiction, which suggests a deep-rooted interest in their national heritage and narratives that explore historical contexts. In terms of academic influence both groups show a significant interest in academic literature, emphasizing the role of education in shaping reading habits.

## Conclusions

This study highlights the diverse reading preferences of college students in the Philippines and Thailand, revealing the significant influence of cultural context on literary choices. Filipino students' preference for contemporary fiction and local authors underscores the importance of cultural identity in shaping reading habits. In contrast, Thai students' affinity for historical fiction and fantasy illustrates a broader engagement with both national narratives and imaginative literature.

The findings suggest several implications for educators and policymakers. By integrating a diverse range of literary genres and authors into academic curricula, educational institutions can create inclusive learning environments that reflect students' cultural identities and intellectual curiosities. Promoting literature from different regions can foster a greater appreciation for global literary traditions and enhance cross-cultural dialogue among students.

## Recommendations

In light of the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Curriculum Diversification:** Educational institutions in the Philippines and Thailand should integrate a wider variety of literary genres, including local literature, historical fiction, and contemporary fiction, into their academic programs.
2. **Promotion of Cultural Exchange:** Organizing literary events, book clubs, and reading circles that celebrate literature from diverse regions can encourage cross-cultural dialogue among students.
3. **Support for Local Authors:** Institutions should advocate for the inclusion of local authors in the curriculum, helping students connect with their cultural heritage.
4. **Access to Diverse Reading Materials:** Providing students with access to various reading formats (e.g., e-books, audiobooks, digital resources) through well-stocked libraries and digital platforms will empower them to explore diverse genres and foster a culture of reading.

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# Measuring Students' Academic Performance: The Role of Non-Cognitive Skills in College Admission Test

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## ABSTRACT

This study explored the role of non-cognitive domains using a college admission test on the academic performance of a state university in Cagayan de Oro City. The study utilized data from the actual takers of the admission tests and enrolled first-year students from the academic year 2023-2024. Academic performance was measured using the Grade Point Average (GPA). The multiple regression analysis revealed that non-cognitive domains significantly predicted academic performance,  $F(4, 1557) = 9.795, p < .001$ . This implies that students in board programs excelled academically due to influences from these domains. Specifically, collaboration and professionalism emerged as significant predictors of academic performance. The findings of the study recognized the significance of non-cognitive skills in overall student success where several practical implications can be applied in the field of academe and testing such as enhance admission criteria, curriculum development and student support services. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) may consider incorporating assessments of the non-cognitive domain to identify students who are likely to excel through enhance admission process. Students' readiness for academic success may improve through revisiting curriculum and design programs. Lastly, offices such as student services and guidance unit may promote holistic support services by addressing the needs of the students.

**Keywords:** *Academic Performance, Non-cognitive domains, Collaboration, Professionalism*

## Introduction

In the Philippines, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have specific admission criteria such as high school grade point average (GPA). Some universities use college admission tests as part of their admission process. Typically, standardized college admission exams comprise cognitive and non-cognitive skills tests. College admission tests are an essential requirement for board and non-board courses as they predict student performance (Barroso, 2022). According to the National Association for College Admission Counseling (2019), nearly 90% of colleges placed moderate importance on admission test scores. In the post-pandemic era, several parents and students believed that the college admission examination was equally important as it provided students with an equal opportunity to showcase their strengths, regardless of their backgrounds (College Board, 2022).

In most studies about standardized college admission exams, cognitive skills are more widely studied than non-cognitive skills. The prediction is dependent on cognitive factors like intelligence and academic abilities. The cognitive test assesses the abilities involved in thinking, such as perception, memory, reasoning, and verbal and mathematical abilities. In instance, standardized test scores like Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and high school GPA were predictors of cumulative college GPA (Jones, 2021).

Unlike cognitive skills, studies on non-cognitive skills remain relatively limited at present. However, several studies recognize the role of non-cognitive skills in academic performance. Non-cognitive skills are attitudes, social and emotional qualities, habits, and traits (Lipnevich et al., 2013). It consists of factors such as attitudes, behaviors, and interests that facilitate successful performance in academic settings. Moreover,

non-cognitive skills have been significantly associated with college students' educational outcomes (Morris et al., 2021). Both cognitive skills and non-cognitive skills are essential components of college admission exams.

Previous studies have been said to aid students' performance in college. Most studies have investigated cognitive factors in the context of academic performance, while few have considered the impact of non-cognitive factors. Studies related to academic performance in the Philippines were also limited. It is also noteworthy to consider students' performance in board courses as they are expected to take licensure board examinations after completing their degree.

In the present study, a college admission test called the University of Science and Technology Admission Test 2 (USTAT2) was used as a tool. This test provides a comprehensive evaluation tool for prospective students. Particularly, non-cognitive skills in this test are termed as non-cognitive domains, which evaluate the attitude of the students. These domains comprise sub-domains such as Global Perspective and Leadership, Creativity and Innovation, Communication Skills, Collaboration, Professionalism, and Resilience. Given this, the present study aims to explore if the non-cognitive domains used in a college admission test of a state university in Cagayan de Oro City can predict academic performance. Specifically, this study intends to answer the following research questions; "What are the levels of academic performance and non-cognitive domains of students enrolled in board courses?" and "Is academic performance significantly predicted non-cognitive domains?"

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study is guided by Tinto's Theory Model of Institutional Departure (1993), which states that college consists of two systems: academic and social integration. Students must be unified in academics and socials to persist in their academic institutions. Academic performance through Grade Point Average (GPA) can manifest academic integration, on the other hand, social integration is measured through students' relations with college society, such as friends, classmates, schoolmates, and faculty (Tinto, 1993). This model suggests that a student enters college with goals and commitment. Students' pre-entry qualities will shape their initial goals and commitment. Hence, these pre-entry qualities include attributes and skills that align with the non-cognitive skills of USTAT2 as a variable of the present study. The experience of students in college will continuously change their level of initial goals and commitments. It suggests that the modified goals and commitments affect the student's decision to stay or leave the college (Tinto, 1975).

Another is the non-cognitive model developed by researchers at the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research, which illustrated how non-cognitive factors affect academic performance (Farinngton et al., 2012). This model described the importance and role of each factor and its relationship to academic performance. Since the existing model of non-cognitive does not have precisely the same skills used in the present study, the researcher utilized definition of domains in the admission test named University of Science and Technology Admission Test 2.0 (USTAT 2) as supplemental support. USTAT 2 serves as the qualifying examination for prospective college students seeking admission to the university. The test's primary purposes include measuring cognitive and non-cognitive characteristics, facilitating appropriate academic placements, identifying students' strengths and weaknesses, and assessing readiness for college-level studies.

## **Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative and predictive design to explore the predictive association between non-cognitive domains of a college admission test and students' academic performance through Multiple Regression Analysis. The study utilized secondary data from the State University of Cagayan de Oro City. This University offers free education in accordance with Republic Act No. 10931. Students from this University demonstrate competence both in academic and non-academic pursuits. In addition, graduates from this university are described as innovative and entrepreneurial thought leaders in the academe and the professional world. They actively engaged in various academic activities and have received recognition nationally and internationally.

The respondents in this study were first-year students enrolled in the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024. A total of 1,562 first-year students enrolled were included in the final data analysis. The study

focused on programs offered by the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines under the College of Engineering (CEA) and College of Science and Technology Education (CSTE). Specifically, the programs under the College of Engineering were: Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, Bachelor of Science in Electronics Engineering, and Bachelor of Science in Geodetic Engineering. All programs were included for the College of Science Technology and Education, namely, Bachelor in Secondary Education Major in Science, Bachelor in Secondary Education Major in Mathematics, Bachelor in Technology and Livelihood Education, and Bachelor in Technical-Vocational Teacher Education. Admission to these programs was based on their college admission scores, which are relatively high compared to other non-board programs. Thus, students in these programs are expected to uphold standards.

In addition, non-cognitive domains were measured by a college admission test called University of Science and Technology Admission Test 2 (USTAT2). This test is designed to effectively assess students' potential attitudes and aptitude and aims to measure both the cognitive and non-cognitive characteristics of the students. The present study focused only on the non-cognitive domains which consists of sub-domains namely; Communication Skills, Collaboration, Professionalism and Resilience. The instrument exhibits good reliability indices. Specifically, Collaboration has an item reliability of .96, Professionalism with item reliability of .99 and Resilience with an item reliability of .98.

On the other hand, the academic performance of students was measured using the prescribed grading system and grade point average (GPA), where the university uses number grades in multiples of 0.25 from 1 to 5, where "1" is the highest and "3" is a lowest passing grade.

## Results and Discussions

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Students' Academic Performance

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
GPA	1562	1.24	4.73	2.2533	.47696

Table 2. Correlation Coefficients of Non-cognitive domains

		GPA	Collaboration	Communication	Professionalism	Resilience
GPA	Pearson Correlation	1	-.113**	-.049	-.142**	-.079**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	.051	<.001	.002
	N	1562	1562	1562	1562	1562

Table 3. Coefficients of Non-cognitive and Academic Performance

Model	B	SE	Beta	T	P
Constant	2.253	.012		188.807	<.001
Collaboration	-.035	.014	-.073	-2.568	.010
Communication	.005	.013	.011	.388	.698
Professionalism	-.055	.014	-.116	-4.021	<.001
Resilience	-.003	.014	-.006	-.217	.828

Table 4. Model Summary

		Change Statistics							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.157 <sup>a</sup>	.025	.022	.471	.025	9.795	4	1557	<.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Collaboration, Communication, Professionalism, Resilience

Descriptive statistics in Table 1 reveal that the participants scored above average in their Grade Point Average (GPA) for the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024, which indicates that the academic performance of all participants falls within the above-average range on the spectrum from excellent to failing Grade Point Average (GPA). This implies that the majority of the participants attend and engage in their classes, put necessary efforts to complete coursework and meet deadlines.

Table 2 displays the correlations between academic performance and non-cognitive domains. As shown, there was a statistically significant negative correlation between academic performance and collaboration ( $r = -.133$ ,  $p < .001$ ), professionalism ( $r = -.142$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and resilience ( $r = -.079$ ,  $p < .002$ ). These findings imply that a higher grade point average (GPA) is associated with lower levels of non-cognitive domains. It is evident that participants executed their student responsibilities by attending classes and preparing their coursework since majority of them attained an above average in their academic performance (refer to Table 1). Considering that participants are from board programs, they may tend to focus more of their time on individual tasks, studying independently, potentially leading to less engagement in collaborative work. While participants may excel academically, their performance might not always align with their professional conduct. They may attend classes but stay passive. Also, participants exhibit resilience and remain optimistic even when their grades decrease.

Moreover, Table 4 reveals a significant relationship between non-cognitive domains and the General Point Average (GPA),  $F(4, 1557) = 9.795$ ,  $p < .001$ . This implies that non-cognitive domains predicted academic performance. Specifically, among all non-cognitive domains, only collaboration and professionalism have impact in predicting the academic performance of the participants (see Table 3). Collaboration was found to predict the general point average of participants ( $p < .010$ ), showing that as academic performance increases, collaboration tends to decrease. This implies that participants rely on their own capabilities, prioritizing their individual academic goals over collaborative work. Also, their focus may be solely on attaining high marks without paying attention to developing their professional conduct. Participants might show inappropriate behavior whenever in collaborative setting such as not contributing satisfactorily or doing all tasks by oneself rather than assigning it to others.

Findings of the present study is consistent with the non-cognitive model developed by University of Chicago Consortium on School Research where they described how non-cognitive factors such as social skills affect academic performance (Farinngton et al., 2012). Also, similar results from the study of Obilor & Onyeaghala (2020) whereby non-cognitive skills influence academic performance of students and that these skills are essential to enhance school performance and success. An improvement in non-cognitive skills leads to a corresponding impact to student's performance (Shajimon & Joseph, 2018).

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of the present study align with the existing research on academic performance and non-cognitive domains, which reveal that non-cognitive domains indeed predict academic performance. Most teacher evaluations for academic performance tasks are usually based on individual grading rather than group work requiring collaboration. Universities with board courses focus on individual test performance as it aligns with the requirements of national exams. Thus, collaboration is not observed.

Moreover, participants in this study exhibited an above-average level of academic performance. This implies that students enrolled in board courses adhere to higher standards in terms of admission acceptance.

This study recognized the significance of non-cognitive skills in overall student success. Future researchers may consider developing more tools with clear interpretations for precise measurements. Through enhanced admission criteria, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) may consider incorporating assessments of the non-cognitive domain to identify students who are likely to excel.

Additionally, the academic council may facilitate curriculum reviews and design programs that prioritize the development of non-cognitive skills, thus enhancing students' readiness for academic success. Also, a longitudinal study could comprehensively examine the impact of non-cognitive skills on academic performance, where researchers may consider a follow-up study after participants' graduation. Future researchers may also explore the latest theories on academic performance rather than be limited to Tinto's Theory Model of Institutional Departure.

Furthermore, the Office of Student Affairs, in coordination with the Guidance Unit, may promote holistic support services by addressing the needs of the students. They would initiate and provide counseling, peer tutorials, coaching, and mentoring to improve academic performance. The office would also provide support by monitoring students' progress and offering incentives through extracurricular activities that reinforce positive student behavior. Student support services potentially lead to improved academic outcomes.

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# Explaining Individual Work Performance in An Academic Setting

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## ABSTRACT

Individual work performance is a complex concept influenced by a multitude of factors. This study, conducted among teachers at a private, non-sectarian university in a major city in Southern Philippines, sought to validate the role of employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior as predictors of individual work performance. The study used a descriptive correlational research design, employing three adapted instruments with the necessary permissions from the original authors. The reliability of the instruments was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha, ensuring cultural relevance. Data were collected from 264 teaching staff members at a non-sectarian university in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the data and address the study's objectives. The findings revealed that employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior are significant predictors of individual work performance, with a strong association between these organizational variables. As an institutional study, we recommend that the university administration consider incorporating these predictive factors into the human resource development program. This paper further suggests expanding the research to include non-teaching personnel for a more comprehensive view. Implementing these recommendations could significantly improve employee performance and enhance human resource strategies, enabling the administration to drive positive change and shape a promising future for the university's human resource management.

**Keywords:** Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Employee Engagement, Counterproductive Behavior, Task Performance, Contextual Performance

## Introduction

Organizations widely acknowledge that work performance is a crucial element in the dynamics of human resources within the workplace. Work performance consistently features prominently in organizational discussions, both in formal and informal settings. Many view it as the ultimate dependent variable in talent management because performance assessments play a role in diverse organizational processes like personnel selection, compensation, rewards, and training, as noted by DeNisi & Murphy (2017) in Villagrasa et al. (2019). Understanding work performance has been approached in diverse ways, as highlighted by Koopmans et al. (2011) and cited by Li, Jameel, Ma, Sun, Hussain, and Mubeen (2022).

Recently, there has been a shift towards focusing on behaviors rather than outcomes in the workplace. This trend began in the 1990s with John P. Campbell, who emphasized that direct and indirect employee behaviors impact organizational goals (Borman & Motowild, 1997, cited in Sittar, 2019). Koopmans (2014) built on Campbell's (1990) theory, stating that individual work performance is based on observable behaviors contributing to organizational success. Campbell and Wiernik (2015) defined work performance as behaviors within an employee's control that add value to the organization. While past work performance assessments focused on objective measures like absences and productivity, Viswesvaran and Ones (2017) argued that these measures often fail to capture the full range of behaviors that constitute employee performance across different contexts. As Campbell's theory puts it, current policies and practices among organizations, including academic institutions, describe work performance in terms of outputs or achieving organizational goals.

For academic institutions, overall teaching performance quality goes into the 360<sup>0</sup> evaluation and is rated by students, self, peers, and supervisors such as academic chairs, deans, and principals. Present practices in the research setting also observe this procedure. However, with the current hybrid approach in instruction, this may not be as feasible as it was practiced before in an entire face-to-face arrangement. How would teachers be evaluated at home or anywhere in a hybrid mode? The working landscape has changed and undoubtedly describes the new typical workplace. This includes, but is not limited to, working from home or anywhere arrangements, automation, and digital transformation. Soft skills are tested, and data privacy becomes a more significant concern, in some instances dramatically. Despite this, work still needs to be done, and managing performance is an essential part of the process (Tensuan, 2021).

It is an understatement to say that the teacher is the most crucial factor in teaching. They set the tone and light of the learning climate (Kadlong, 2017). However, using the previous practice of the 360-degree approach in evaluating teaching performance may not be realistic when teachers work from home or anywhere in a hybrid mode. This method can provide valuable information, but it can be argued that capturing the complexity and full range of behaviors that make up a teacher's performance at work may not be feasible with the new regular work arrangement.

This study intends to validate an individual work performance scale that can predict measurable organizational variables. It is premised on the assumption that should these organizational variables mentioned in this study affect work performance positively, the organization may use these scales as bases for employee intervention to review their present effort on improving teachers' work performance through organizational citizenship behavior and employee engagement. The employee's self-report could be used as a formative tool. Item indicators that encompass behaviors relative to organizational goals can be used to enhance employee behavior. Therefore, enhancing organizational citizenship and employee engagement also promises enhanced individual work performance. This study hopes to contribute to the literature on work performances that capture varied dimensions of employee behavior regardless of the physical workplace.

## **Framework and Literature Review**

The performance theory proposed by John P. Campbell (1990) defined performance as actions or behaviors relevant to an organization's goals that are measurable in contribution levels. He characterized job performance as an individual-level variable, distinguishing it from broader constructs like organizational or national performance, which are higher-level variables (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015). This distinction separates performance from outcomes, indicating that outcomes are influenced by an individual's performance and other factors. Outcomes are determined by various influences beyond an employee's behaviors and actions. Despite this, there is a shared understanding of the multifaceted nature of performance, as acknowledged by Dalal et al. (2012) (as cited by Villagrasa et al., 2019).

*Individual Work Performance.* Campbell and Wiernik (2015) reviewed job performance, which encompasses behaviors within workers' control that contribute to organizational objectives. The review underscores that performance pertains to a collection of behaviors, excluding the variables influencing these behaviors or their consequences. Individual work performance is categorized into task, contextual, and counterproductive.

Task performance is the type of performance with which supervisors and employees are most familiar. It measures how well workers carry out the job duties specified in their job description (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Decisions like promotions, pay increases, or terminations are often based on an individual's level of task performance. While supervisor ratings are commonly used to evaluate task performance, some jobs allow for collecting objective indicators. For instance, teachers' performance can be assessed by evaluating their teaching skills through classroom observation. Koopmans et al.'s (2011) review further expanded this framework by including task-performance indicators, such as completing job tasks, staying updated on knowledge, working accurately, planning and organizing, and problem-solving, which are also relevant to teachers' performance.

The second classification is contextual performance, involving actions that are not explicitly specified in one's job description but contribute to the overall welfare of the organization or individuals at work, such

as supervisors or co-workers. This often entails surpassing regular duties, commonly referred to as 'going above and beyond the call of duty' (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Contextual performance includes tasks beyond job duties, demonstrating initiative, being proactive, collaborating with others, or expressing enthusiasm (Koopmans et al., 2011). In contrast to task performance, contextual performance enhances the effective functioning of the organization, even though it may not directly impact workers' productivity (MacKenzie et al., 1991, as cited by Villagrasa, 2019). Examples in an academic setting encompass taking charge of an absent co-teacher class, displaying courtesy, or engaging in behaviors not formally recognized or rewarded.

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) is the third category of individual work performance that involves voluntary actions violating significant organizational norms and jeopardizing the well-being of the organization, its members, or both. Robinson and Bennett (2002) divided counterproductive behavior into two aspects: deviance directed toward the organization and deviance directed toward other individuals. Instead of contributing to organizational goals, these actions go against those goals. Research shows that performance is a dynamic concept, fluctuating within individuals and changing over time (Sonnentag et al., 2008). Examples of CWB include off-task behavior, presentism, complaining, intentionally doing tasks incorrectly, and misusing privileges (Koopmans et al., 2011 & Koopmans et al., 2019).

Employee behavior in the workplace is crucial to attaining organizational goals. Campbell's Performance Theory points toward employees' work performance and contends that organizational aspects could affect individual work performance. Employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior are among the organizational variables that are implied to affect individual work behavior directly or indirectly (Schaefer, 2016; Pickford, 2016). Also, a systematic review was conducted that fully confirmed the authors' hypotheses, proving the existence of a statistically significant relation between employee engagement and different performance categories, including work performance (Motyka, 2018).

*Employee Engagement and Individual Work Performance.* The success of any organization or institution relies heavily on dedicated and involved individuals. The achievements of organizations or institutions consistently stem from the valuable contributions of engaged human resources, serving as a driving force for business and market success (Nagoji et al., 2022). Employee engagement comprises three elements: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor involves high energy, mental resilience, willingness to invest effort, and persistence in work. Dedication includes strong involvement, a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge. As a facet of employee engagement, absorption denotes an extensive and enduring state of mind. Employee engagement, in essence, represents a scenario where an individual is emotionally and intellectually dedicated to the organization. Absorption, specifically, reflects the depth of focus an individual has on their work, allowing them to detach from the surrounding environment (Riyanto et al., 2019; Schaufeli, 2012; Rayton et al., 2014) as cited by Jaya & Ariyanto (2021)

Employee engagement is among the crucial elements for the success of an organization, as it is closely interconnected with various aspects like keeping employees, boosting morale, and enhancing productivity (Clark, 2021). Crucially, engaged employees experience greater happiness at work and in their personal lives. Engagement infuses one's actions with purpose, energy, and enthusiasm, logically establishing a connection between employee engagement and work performance (OWL LAB, 2021). Saks (2019) provided an updated literature review on the factors leading to and resulting from employee engagement. The discussions highlighted positive links between employee engagement and work performance. Rich, Lepine, and Crawford (2010) supported this contention with their study that found job engagement, a component of employee engagement, positively predicts individual work performance. The same study also revealed that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and job performance, indicating that engaged employees who manifest organizational citizenship behavior tend to perform better at work.

*Organizational Citizen Behavior and Individual Performance.* Like employee engagement, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is defined in various ways in the extensive literature (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Organ, 1988, 1997, 2016). OCB involves employee behaviors that, while not crucial to their tasks, contribute to the smooth functioning of the organization. These behaviors are discretionary actions beyond the formal job description. In line with Villagrasa et al. (2019), OCB is relevant to work performance as it encompasses actions under workers' control that contribute to organizational goals. Examples of OCB include assisting coworkers or attending non-mandatory functions. Understanding why employees engage

in OCB is of significant interest (Lee & Allen, 2002). According to Organ (2016), OCB is individual behavior that is not explicitly recognized by the formal reward system but, when aggregated, promotes effective organizational functioning. Employees exhibiting organizational citizenship will go the extra mile out of personal motivation, potentially leading to increased performance and job satisfaction (Pickford, 2016).

A study by Lee and Allen (2002) indicated that OCB can be divided into two categories: behavior that is directed toward other individuals (OCBI) and behavior that is directed toward the organization (OCBO). OCBI behaviors indirectly benefit the individual and the organization, such as aiding other employees needing help. Altruism and courtesy are actions aimed at other employees and thus fall under the umbrella of OCBI. Dachner, Ellingson, and Tews (2017) found that OCBI is essential to an organization's success because it improves work performance, productivity, and teamwork and creates a more positive work climate. It is known to be a form of pro-social exchange theory, which says that strong ties lead to the reciprocity of positive behavior (Lie, 2018). OCBO, on the other hand, is a behavior that benefits the organization directly, such as letting management know when one cannot come to work on a particular day. Conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship are behaviors intended to benefit the organization and can subsequently be considered OCBOs (Zeinabadi, 2010). OCBOs are designed to benefit the entire organization and will likely affect performance directly. OCBO performance relates to a complex exchange as it is more likely to go unnoticed; thus, individuals may not be as motivated to perform them. More proactive and competent individuals are more likely to engage in OCBO behaviors because they pay more attention to opportunities (Kisamore et al., 2014). A proactive personality is crucial because even when individuals do not find a situation particularly meaningful, they will still perform OCBOs (Liguori, et al., 2013).

Lay et al. (2020) found that organizational citizenship behavior affects employee performance. This was conducted in a hotel setting, but considering hotels as a service organization, the study's findings provide relevant support to the assumption of this study. Likewise, Mardhotillah et al. (2021), a study at Nahdlatul Ulama University of Surabaya, Indonesia, on the antecedents of work performance collected data from 70 permanent employees of their education administration and identified organizational citizenship behavior together with job satisfaction as among the antecedents of work performance. Likewise, the performance of employees at private universities in West Sumatra is also influenced by organizational citizenship behavior, as highlighted by Ridwan et al. (2020). Among the various dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior, conscientiousness—particularly as indicated by job completion—significantly impacts employee performance. The results showed that Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) had a significant direct effect on employee performance.

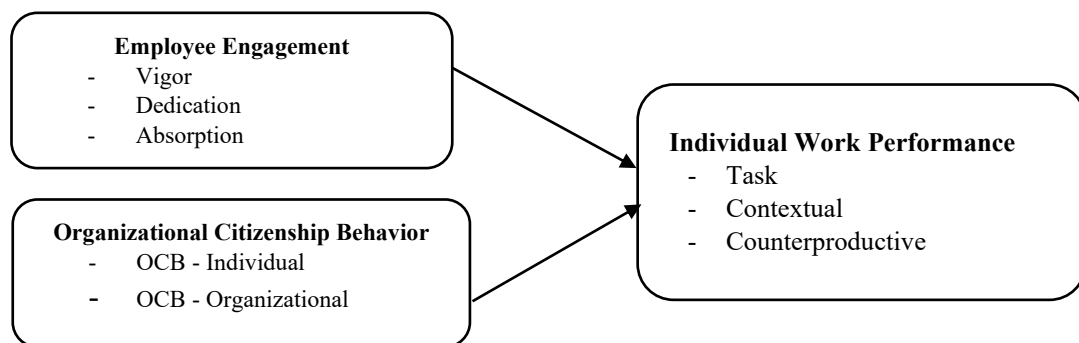
The arguments just discussed give sufficient support that individual work performance is related to and can influence employee engagement (Saks, 2019; Rich et al., 2010; Nagoji et al., 2022; Clark, 2021). It is also linked with organizational citizenship behavior (Dachner et al., 2017; Lie, 2018; Kisamore et al., 2014; Lay et al., 2020; Mardhotillah et al., 2021; Ridwan et al., 2020). In summary, Figure 1 graphically presents this study's assertions. It theorized that individual work performance, comprising task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive performance, is primarily affected by employee engagement indicated by vigor, dedication, absorption, and organizational citizenship behaviors.

## **Objectives Of the Study**

This study sought to explain individual work performance through a model of employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among teaching employees of an HEI in the Southern Philippines.

**Figure 1.**

*Conceptual Framework of the Study*



## Methodology

The study was conducted at a private, non-sectarian university in Cagayan de Oro City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines. A quantitative approach was employed in the context of causal-relationship design. Using Cochran's formula, a sample of 264 was randomly drawn from 595 teaching employees. Three (3) sets of instruments were used in this study; the owners/authors granted permissions. These are the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) with the permission of Dr. Linda Koopmans (2015); the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale Schaufeli (2014) (UWES-9), a nine-item self-report scale; and the Lee and Allen's Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (2002). Cronbach's Alpha Test was used to assess variability and reliability. There were modifications. The questionnaires were validated using expert opinions and subjected to pilot testing to ensure reliability and effectiveness. Cronbach's Alpha Indices for Individual Work Performance include the following: Task performance (.913), Contextual Performance (.902), and Counterproductive Performance (.822). For Employee Engagement: Vigor (.864); Dedication (.872) and Absorption (.809). Meanwhile, for Organizational Citizenship Behavior: OCB-Behavior (.863) and OCB Individual (.880).

Structural Equation Modelling was used to attain the objective of the study. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a widely used statistical modeling technique combining factor and regression analysis. Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen (2008) recommend using specific criteria to evaluate a hypothesized model's statistical significance and substantive meaning on the absolute and incremental fit indices. SEM was used to answer the study's objective using path analysis. The fitness of the data utilized Chi-Square ratio  $\chi^2/df$  (CMIN/DF), Normed Fit Index, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), and Root Mean Square of Error of Approximation (RMSEA). Recent advances for RMSEA cut-off points have noticeably decreased in the last fifteen years, according to Hooper et al. (2008). It was not until the early nineties that a range of .05 to .10 was acceptable for RMSEA. Hu & Bentler (2009) asserted that a cutoff value close to .06 for RMSEA is required before the study can conclude a relatively good fit between the hypothesized model and the observed data. The structural equation model hopes to establish employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior as predictors of individual work performance.

## Results and Discussion

The study hypothesized that employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior can predict individual work performance. Table 1 shows the standard fit criterion used to determine the best-fit model. The structural model met the statistical significance and substantive meaning criteria, as Hooper et al. (2008) recommended. The model showed a good fit based on absolute and incremental fit indices. Specifically, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.051, the root mean square residual (RMR) was 0.018 (close to zero), and the goodness of fit index (GFI) was 0.990. Incremental fit indices, including NFI, GFI, and CFI, were all  $\geq 0.90$ .

**Table 1**

Standard Fit Criterion and Fit Indices for the Hypothesized Model

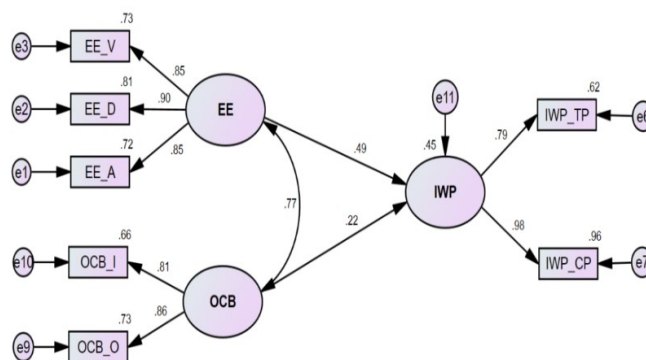
Categories	Absolute Fit			Incremental Fit			Parsimonious
	RMR	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	CMIN/DF
<b>The Best Fit Model</b>	.018	.051	.975	.990	.976	.984	1.697
<b>Standard Fit Criterion</b>	Nearing Zero	$\leq .05 - .06$	$> .90$	$> .90$	$> .90$	$> .90$	$X^2 \text{ to } df < 2.0$

Additionally, the parsimonious fit, indicated by the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio, was 1.697. These results confirm that employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior influence individual work performance.

Figure 2 shows the best-fit model with path coefficients and the structural equation model's path diagram. Individual work performance is the effect of employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior.

**Figure 2**

The Best Fit Model



Established by its path coefficient, Figure 2 shows that measured Individual Work Performance through task performance (TP) and contextual performance (CP) can be predicted through employee engagement (EE) ( $\beta = .49$ ) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) ( $\beta = .22$ ). It is further noticed that employee engagement (EE) is a covariant of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) ( $\text{CVR} = .77$ ) implying an associational relationship between these two constructs. Furthermore, individual work performance is strongly influenced by employee engagement through dedication ( $r = .90$ ), vigor ( $r = .85$ ), and absorption ( $r = .85$ ). Dedication has the most substantial influence among the three sub-variables of employee engagement.

The structural equation is:

$$\text{Individual Work Performance} = .49 \text{ employee engagement} + .22 \text{ organizational citizenship behavior}$$

The standardized effect of the independent variables (employee engagement,  $\beta = .49$ , and organizational citizenship behavior,  $\beta = .22$ ) positively contribute to individual work performance, with each having different levels of influence.

Employee engagement indicates a relatively strong positive relationship with individual work performance. It means that for every one-unit increase in employee engagement, individual work performance increases by 0.49 units, holding other factors constant. This suggests that employee engagement plays a significant role in enhancing individual work performance. These findings are strongly supported by Harter et al. (2002), Rich et al. (2010), and Saks (2019). Harter et al. (2002) established a strong positive relationship between employee engagement and various business outcomes, including work performance. On the other

hand, organizational citizenship behavior has a moderate positive relationship with individual work performance. Individual work performance increases by 0.22 units for every one-unit increase in OCB, assuming other factors are constant.

In summary, the model indicates that employee engagement and OCB are essential contributors to individual work performance, with employee engagement having a more substantial impact than OCB. Lay (2020) found that organizational citizenship behavior affects employee performance in a hotel setting. Considering hotels to be service organizations, the findings of Lay et al. (2020) support the result of this present study. Likewise, Mardhotillah et al. (2021) identified organizational citizenship behavior and job satisfaction as antecedents of work performance. On the other hand, contextual performance, according to Borman and Motowildlo (1997) as cited by Diaz and Delgado (2015), is also called citizenship behavior performance, involving behaviors that are not directly related to job tasks but have a significant impact on organizational, social, and psychological contexts. These behaviors serve as catalysts for the efficient undertaking of the entrusted tasks. It also includes tasks beyond job duties, initiative, proactivity, cooperating with others, or enthusiasm (Koopmans et al., 2011).

The structural model generated in this study established that high employee engagement through vigor, dedication, and absorption causes higher task performance and contextual performance to the organization's advantage. Contextualizing this argument in the university setting, when teachers are strong, energetic, and enthusiastic at work; possess a sense of pride, inspiration, and enthusiasm towards their job; and often get carried away and experience positive effects while working intensely, the university may be assured that these teachers deliver not only their task performance but even their contextual performance with less supervision. Thus, even when they are in a hybrid mode of delivering instruction, the university is assured of good, if not better, work performance from the teachers as long as the top management consistently pursues regular efforts toward enhancing employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior.

The model further disclosed that employee engagement covaries with organizational citizenship behavior. Research studies cited by Bateman (2019) provided substantial scholarly support for the existence of a positive connection between organizational citizenship behaviors and employee engagement when he mentioned Madan and Srivastava (2016), who conducted a study involving 246 middle-level managers representing 30 different public and private sector organizations in Delhi National Capital Region. They found a positive relationship between employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviors. Likewise, Wahyu Ariani (2013) conducted a study involving 507 respondents in Indonesia and found a positive relationship between organizational citizenship behaviors and employee engagement. This confounding relationship implies the need for the university administration to ensure that policies and practices support programs, projects, and activities that promote employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior.

This study explained individual work performance through employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior evidenced in the generated model. It expounds that employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior can influence individual work performance, whereas employee engagement is also strongly associated with organizational citizenship behavior.

## **Conclusion**

Earlier, this study pronounced that it intends to validate a work performance scale that may be used to enhance teachers' behavior working in a hybrid mode that relates to the organizational goals of this higher education institution. The working landscape has changed and undoubtedly describes the new average workplace. The fact that employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior are predictive of individual work performance can benefit the organization. The result of this study is a piece of scientific evidence that individual work performance is ensured through enhanced employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior regardless of the physical workplace.

The study has established that highly engaged teachers who characterize organizational citizenship are always willing to "go the extra mile" out of personal motivation. These are motivations that can lead to increased performance and job satisfaction. This further means that teachers working in a hybrid mode assure the university of better performance should the institution regularly enhance their employee



engagement and organizational citizenship behaviors through regular human resource development programs, projects, and activities. To ensure optimal work performance from teachers, even in a hybrid mode of instruction, the university must consistently prioritize efforts to enhance employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior, led by top management. These efforts can help maintain high standards of teaching and overall performance.

A shift from employee performance based on organizational outcomes to self-report behavior-based work performance is radically conceivable. Self-reporting individual work performance may be used as a formative assessment tool.

The same study may be replicated to include non-teaching personnel and consider other variables. It may also be replicated in other academic institutions to verify and establish its findings' strength and widen its application's generalizability before using it as an institutional tool for indirectly assessing work performance through other measurable organizational variables.

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# Ethnolinguistic Exploration on Translanguaging Narratives in Coastal Villages in the Philippines as Inputs for the Development of Storybook in K to 12

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## ABSTRACT

The diaspora of fishers from various coastal communities in the Philippines to other seaside villages contributed to developing their cultural practices relative to their livelihood. With the implementing of the K to 12 in basic education in the country, pressing concerns about the lack of contextualized instructional materials in these trans-local spaces emerged. This study aimed to generate translanguaging practices as bases for developing storybooks for K to 12. Under the lens of narrative ethnography, translanguaging narratives were analyzed. This study was conducted for six months of immersion in the coastal community with fifteen participants who were purposively chosen and all qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively using both manual coding and QDA Lite Miner software processing. It reveals that the intergenerational succession of their livelihood vis-à-vis the migratory nature of living and mobility has an underlying impact on the fishers' lives as multilingual living in trans-local communities. Intrasentential translanguaging occurs in most cases wherein they perform code-switching. Word coinage as an invoicing strategy was employed as their translingual negotiation strategy. Confirmation check, clarification, recast, and let-it-pass strategies as interactional strategies were observed. A contextualized storybook accompanied by a teacher's guide was developed, validated, evaluated, and pilot-tested. It resulted in a "very acceptable" for the storybook and an "excellent" rating for the teacher's guide. The study recommends that school heads create opportunities to involve teachers, parents, and other people in the coastal community to interact beyond the classroom setting. For teachers, innovative and creative classroom activities that integrate the cultural practices in the coastal communities that could trigger the interest of students towards the subject matter may be utilized. They may utilize local and indigenous resources available in the community in their classroom activities.

**Keywords:** Translingual, translanguaging, instructional materials, code-switching, multilingualism

## Introduction

Fishing is the major source of livelihood for people living in 15 coastal municipalities in the province of Antique, Philippines. It is a flourishing industry because of the rich fishing ground of the Cuyo East Pass, Sulu Sea, and the municipal waters along the approximately 296.8-kilometer coastline in the province. These trans-local spaces were transformed into a melting pot of culture and linguistic variation with the arrival of migrant fishers who speak different languages from different islands which commenced five decades ago. The significant fact about this study is an assumption that the migrant fishers' communities, by their nature, have developed unique cultures, needs, and aspirations that remain intact until now. As immigrants with a different native language, the translingual features in their narratives were delved and analyzed. With the full implementation of Mother-Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in basic education in the Philippines, there seems to be limited literature that focuses specifically on the translanguaging practices among migrant workers, and a dearth of contextualized instructional materials at present. More so, children of these migrant fishers are facing difficulties in their mother tongue subjects which are being taught by teachers using the Kinaray-a language. Given the challenges faced by teachers in using their mother tongue in their classrooms, various problems beset the implementation of the curriculum in multilingual communities. Alexander (2014) identified these problems, which include the

following: lack of instructional materials, lack of trained teachers, problem of subject matter, and ways of evaluating these problems have remained endemic and persistent in the country.

## Statement of the problem

This study aimed to generate the translanguaging practices of migrant fishers in the coastal villages in Antique, Philippines as inputs in the development of culturally relevant instructional materials in for K to 12. It sought answers to the following research questions: What are the translanguaging practices of migrant fishers? What are the translanguaging features drawn from the narratives of migrant fishers? Lastly, what translanguaging instructional materials may be developed aligned with the competencies of the K to 12 curriculum?

## Epistemological and Theoretical Framework of the Study

The framework in this study encompasses the epistemology encapsulated in the theoretical framework, and embedded in the methodology which serves as a guide in choosing the appropriate methodology, and types of methods used. Figure 1 presents the framework of the study.

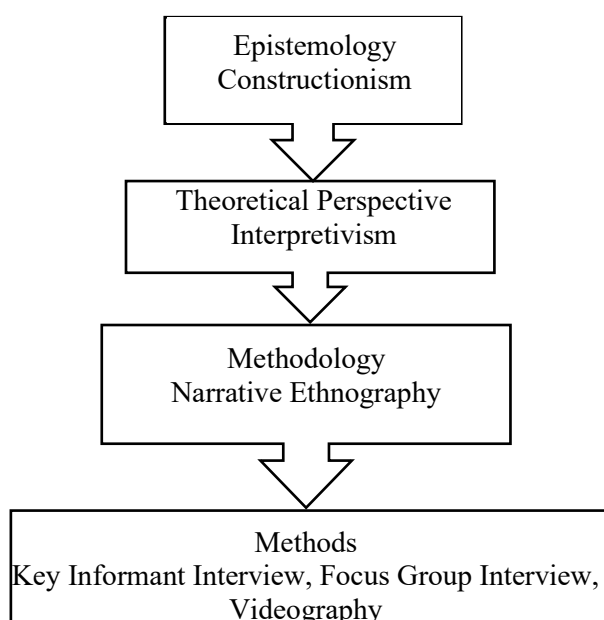


Figure 1. Framework of the study in relation to Crotty's research framework

Culture and language are inseparable. However, attempts at a relationship between them are complex because of the great difficulty in understanding human beings' cognitive processes during communication. Culture is defined by several experts in various ways. Pertierra (2002) posited that people used it as a framework for organizing the world. Wardhaugh (2002) defined language as a set of knowledge of rules and principles and of the ways of saying and doing things with sounds, words, and sentences rather than just knowledge of specific sounds, words, and sentences. From empirical and epistemological points of departure, the interplay between culture and language is at the nexus of this study. This underpinning perspective underscores the importance of the concept of cultural funds of knowledge which is based on the premise that people have cultural knowledge, and their experiences in life give them that knowledge.

Demographically, the present state of linguistic composition in the world is described by some experts as in a state of "instability." In South East Asian nations, similar realities are happening given the intense diversity of cultures and languages in recent times due to globalization and migration. One of the impactful changes is the shift of language learning perspectives, from monolingual to bilingual, and multilingual. Numerous scholars in the field of linguistics in the 21st century have been engaged in the development of new theories that transcend the monoglossic perspective. García (2017) concisely described

translanguaging as the “language and meaning-making practices of bilinguals.” The underlying concepts and tenets of translanguaging are anchored on the historical development process relative to language development and could be traced to the language perspective of monolingualism. Canagarajah (2013) made use of a classification system of negotiation strategies that encompasses describing multilingual interaction. He developed his own macro strategies which he termed translingual negotiation strategies that include the following: envoicing, recontextualization, interactional, and entextualization. These were constructed based on personal, contextual, social, and textual aspects of communication acts.

## **Methodology**

Narrative ethnography as a research methodology in this study was employed by the researchers. Gubrium & Holstein (2008) broadly defined narrative ethnography as an ethnographic study of narrativity. They specifically defined it as a method of procedure and analysis aimed at close scrutiny of social situations, their actors, and actions in relation to narratives. Under the lens of narrative ethnography, the intricacies of fishing knowledge and practices and translingual features in the narratives of migrant fishers were delved. Along the process, the researchers immersed in their narratives. Actively observing and participating in their activities and fishing practices in their community, and immersing in their narratives, told using their distinct language made them capture the nuances of the migrant fishers’ culture.

Six months of immersion provided the researchers the opportunity to enter the life spaces of migrant fishers and gave them opportunities to directly observe and document the participants’ narratives and all the vital processes and practices relative to their life spaces as fishers. Moreover, an array of methods was utilized in this study which includes the following: fieldwork, key informant interviews, and videography. The study was conducted in the most populous coastal villages of migrant fishers, in Antique, Philippines.

Primary participants were chosen based on the purposive sampling technique. Creswell (2013) writes that among the sampling techniques used in the qualitative study, purposive sampling aptly fits in selecting participants who possess rich knowledge and experiences relative to the research topic. Primary participants were the nine migrant fishers and six subsidiary or secondary participants who are mostly wives or daughters of migrant fishers. To purposively choose the primary participants, inclusion criteria were put into consideration, most particularly on the following parameters: migrant fishers’ home of origin and the number of years in the coastal community; pseudonyms were used in the study as agreed upon in the consent form with them relative to ethical considerations.

All narratives were audio recorded using a digital voice recorder and observations were noted in the field note. Generation of verbatim interview transcripts was performed. Moreover, all transcribed interviews were uploaded and coded in the QDA Miner Lite, version 2.0.9 software in order to systematically process codes into categories. Polkinghorne’s analysis of narratives or the paradigmatic mode of analysis was adapted in constructing the narratives in the study. In this mode of analysis, it seeks to identify common themes or conceptual manifestations discovered in the data, and these findings would be arranged around descriptions of themes that are common across collected stories (Polkinghorne, 2006). A storybook was evaluated using the validated researcher-made Evaluation Rating Sheet for Instructional Materials (Print Small Books) which was adapted from the Evaluation Rating Sheet for Print Resources of the Department of Education Guidelines and Processes for LRMDs Assessment and Evaluation and West Visayas State University Evaluation Form for Printed Instructional Materials. Three validators who are experts in reading, statistics, and instructional development evaluated the rating sheet. The teacher’s guide was examined utilizing the duly validated researcher-made Evaluation Rating Sheet for Teacher’s Guides indicating four main indicators; Objectives, Subject Matter/Content, Procedure, and Evaluation. This rating sheet was validated by three experts in the field of education in the Philippines.

## **Results**

The diaspora of migrant fishers from different islands to Antique, Philippines contributed to the development of their cultural practices relative to their livelihood vis-a-vis diversity of linguistic features in their language use. The existence of intergenerational succession of their livelihood vis-à-vis the migratory nature of living and mobility has an underlying impact on their lives as bilinguals and

multilingual living in multicultural and multilingual spaces. Specifically, linguistic features in their narratives are representative of the mix of languages that occurred, given their multicultural existence.

### *Mobility and Translanguaging Practices*

Mobility speaks volumes of how migrant fishers lived their lives for several decades. This reality underscores how cultures and languages flow across borders and the dynamicity in languages they acquired in terms of the varied linguistic landscapes in every place that they inhabit. In the coastal community in the Philippines, migrant fishers are labeled as *mga Cebuano* or the Cebuanos, pertaining to people living in Cebu, an island in the Philippines, regardless of the type of language they speak or the place where they came from. This label might hold water due to their ethnicity, but linguistically, they are multilingual who communicate using a code-mix of three languages in the Philippines, namely, Cebuano – Hiligaynon – Kinaray-a languages in their daily communication. Based on their narratives, intra-sentential translanguaging occur in most cases wherein insertion of words or phrases and clauses as syntactic boundaries were utilized to show the continuity of languaging, which may refer to the code switching to English, Cebuano and Kinaray-a.

Table 1: Features of Translanguaging Practices

Category	Specific Type	Examples
Intra-sentential translanguaging	Segmented	Insertion of Cebuano word ( <i>i.e.</i> , <i>makapaw</i> )
		Insertion of English phrases ( <i>i.e.</i> , <i>seven years</i> , <i>five years</i> )
		Interchanging of words (( <i>i.e.</i> , <i>makapoy-makapaw</i> )
		Use of particle “ <i>kwan</i> ”
		Insertion of demonstrative pronouns in Kinaray-a ( <i>i.e.</i> , <i>ra</i> , <i>dya</i> , <i>dyan</i> , <i>tana</i> )
		Insertion of Cebuano phrases and clauses as syntactic boundaries ( <i>i.e.</i> , <i>unsa to pangitaon</i> )

This is related to the study of Nguyen (2013) who cited that the intra-sentential category was based on the grammatical functions in the sentence or statements. In the context of the narrative in the study, this category is aligned with the translanguaging perspective that posits the idea that a flow of thought can be expressed in more than one language. Insertion of words or phrases and clauses as syntactic boundaries was utilized to show the continuity of languaging, which may refer to the code-switching to English, Cebuano, and Kinaray-a. The occurrence of intra-sentential translanguaging in phrases and clauses could be gleaned from the excerpt of interview with key informant named Berto fondly recounted his experience of having a productive fishing during season of good harvest of bullet tuna or commonly called as *aloy* in the village.

*“Gagmay nga aloy, nagsuga kame sang gab-e, tapos, ti kundi ang aloy makapaw, once ang aloy makapoy, ah makapaw, kwan na sya mung, maitom. Once maitom, ah.. amat-amaton namon bugsay pakadto sa ubog, sa may bato-bato na sa nabaw na medyo isa ka dupa. Ang aloy, na siya mung, siksik gid na siya mung, siksik, amo to pagsigpaw namon. Ginsigpaw, until nga napuno ang amon sakayan! Puno ang amon sakayan, ang pumpboat! Puno! Ti, may ara pa gid isda, siling ni Papa, ‘tama na kay malunod na ta sini, kay mapuli na ta.’ Hahaha! Ti, puli kame eh.”*

[Smaller type of *aloy* or bullet tuna. We went fishing using light at night which lured *aloy* to go to the surface of the sea, and once they were tired, ah I mean will be visible in the surface area of the water, they have these dark colors reflected in the water. Once we have seen them, we will slowly paddle our boat toward the shallow area or in the rocky part approximately one fathom or arm’s length deep. These *aloy* are in a big group, then we started to catch them using *sigpaw* or a bag-shaped fishnet on a long handle. We did it so many times until such time that our pump boat was so full already with *aloy*. Our pump boat was filled with fish, fully loaded already! But there



are still a lot of *aloy* out there. My papa said, “We have to stop because our pump boat will capsize already because it’s so full. We have to go.” Hahaha! Then we paddled towards home.]

The insertion of Cebuano word *makapaw* composed of two morphemes: the noun *kapaw* referring to surface, preceded by the prefix *ma* in the sentence, and English words *once* and *until* were used in sentences phrased in Hiligaynon. Similarly, the use of *ubog*, a verb which means to wade, and the interchanging of the word *makapaw* with *makapoy*, and correcting again to *makapaw* shows how Ren negotiates his languaging process between the two different words that sounds alike or does he also try to consider the audience, the reason for the shift. His use of the expression or particle *kwan* expressing an attempt at meaning shows his momentary difficulty in grasping for the right term to describe a thing, and in the context of the narrative, his description of the color of *aloy* as reflected in the water. Instead of pausing and trying to remember how to describe it, he used the term *kwan* instead which is present in Cebuano, Hiligaynon and Kinaray-a languages. These are examples of intra-sentential translanguaging specifically categorized as segmented translanguaging.

In addition, occurrence of intra-sentential translanguaging in phrases and clauses could be gleaned from the narrative of primary informant named *Ren* when he was asked as to how did he come to know coastal village, Antique.

*“Ti, kay ang taga amon nagpa-Antique, nagkadto sila diri. Tapos nagbakasyon lang bala sir aw. Tapos ang taga amon nagsiling nga, “Upod ka? Mapa-Antique ta.” Ngaa, unsa to pangitaon?” Managat. Naglakat ako nga wala man kabalo akon mga ginikanan nga nagkadto ko diri. Nag-upod lang gid ko eh. Sang gapanagat na kame, ah sige man pud ko suka. Nagasuka ko sir. Sige ko suka. Kay dalagko man abi balod, kag sige suka eh. Tapos abot diri, amo na. Waay ko estaran, pero akon diri, naga-estar ko sa iban nga tahu, sa mga balay-balay, dira ko ga-estar. Ti, estar ko sa akon mga migo eh. Kaisa sa pumpboat lang ko nagaestar mung. Sa pumpboat lang ko nagakaon. Kay mas maayo pa sa pumpboat kay damo pa pagkaon mung. Kay rudto man tanan mga pagkaon bay.”*

[Well, I have known many people from our place who went here in Antique. They just went here on vacation. Then one person in our place said, “Are you going to come with us? We will go to Antique. I answered, why, what are we going to work there? We will go fishing. I went here without the knowledge of my parents. I just went with my friends. When we are already traveling by sea, I feel nauseated too. I always vomit sir because of the big waves here. Then, by the time we arrived here, the situation was, that I didn’t have a house to live by. What I did was, I lived in my friend’s house. Well, I lived with them. Sometimes I stayed in the pump boat, I also ate there. It is better to live in the pump boat because it has a lot of food. All our foods are stocked there].

Several things are noted in this narrative. The insertion of Cebuano phrase, *unsa to pangitaon* with Hiligaynon interrogation adverb *ngaa* or why is an example of an intra-sentential translanguaging. A code mixing of the two languages occurs within a phrase with the purpose of emphasizing his own quoted question to the person he is talking with. It presents a sequential type of translanguaging in which a sequence of words in a phrase in Cebuano are integrated in the sentence. In this case, Ren being a second generation migrant fisher and like most multilinguals, the use of two or more languages in the conversation is not an extraordinary phenomenon but rather a normal situation to happen. According to Gocheco (2013), code mixing is a natural phenomenon in bilingual and multilingual communities. This phenomenon usually happens when the conversant uses both languages together to the extent that they change from one language, like Hiligaynon to Cebuano in the course of a single utterance. Moreover, the insertion of Cebuano particle *pud* which means too or in Kinaray-a *ra* within the sentence is considered as a segmented type of intrasentential translanguaging. Similarly, the Kinaray-a demonstrative pronoun *rudto* which means there, and the particle *bay* which expresses the idea of certainty were integrated in the same line and functions likewise as segmented translanguaging. As multilinguals, mixing of languages become natural to them as manifested in their daily communication practices and could be argued as their way of maximizing their multicultural resources which could be best understood under the lens of multilingualism.

## Translingual Negotiation Strategies

In terms of their translingual negotiation strategies, the use of word coinage and occurrence of code-switching, categorized as envoicing strategy, are employed. Furthermore, confirmation check, clarification, recast, and let-it-pass strategies are observed. These are categorized as interactional strategies.

Table 2: Negotiation Strategies Employed by Migrant Fishers

Strategies	Specific Types
Envoicing Strategy	Word coinage, code-switching
Interactional Strategy	Confirmation check, clarification, recast, let-it-pass

The conversation below between a migrant fisher named *Pepoy* and the researcher reveals how they used translingual negotiation strategies. When asked on what are the types of fish he usually catch in fishing, the informant replied:

*Pepoy:* ["Ah, sari-sari. May kwan man may aloy, may bisugo, may iya isda man sa bato. Sa bawra.

*Researcher:* Mga isda sa bato? Bawra?

*Pepoy:* Huo. Bawra. Mga isda na sa bato."

*Pepoy:* Ah, It's a variety of fishes. There is also *kwan*, *aloy*, also *bisugo*, and also fishes found in the coral reefs. In *bawra*.

*Researcher:* You are saying, fishes found in the reefs?

*Pepoy:* Yes. *Bawra*. These are fishes found in the coral reefs.]

In this excerpt of conversation, the researcher's initial reaction to *Pepoy*'s description of fishes that could be found in the *bawra* is to confirm it to him due to the fact that it was the first time that the researcher heard of such word. His understanding of his description *isda sa bato* translates to fishes that dwell in the area of the sea made up of stones. Being the more knowledgeable person in identifying types of fishes, the researcher asked a confirmation question to *Pepoy* in order to check if it was the exact word. The word *bawra* was repeated in order to check if it really pertains to the kind of aquatic environment made up of stones. In this case, comprehension and confirmation check as a negotiation strategies were deployed from that would aid them to negotiate meaning correctly.

This strategy is in line to the interactional strategy termed as confirmation check by Canagarajah (2013). Confirmation check is performed by requesting confirmation that one heard or understood something correctly. In the study of Widiyanto (2016) on the translingual negotiation strategies and translingual identities in Indonesia, he found out that some of the important strategies that his participants used are confirmation and "let it pass" principle. With these strategies used among his bilingual participants, they deployed these to allow meaning negotiation among them during communication in the language contact spaces. Interestingly, the word *bawra* that most migrant fishers in the locality have been mentioning is a shortened term of the Cebuano word *bahura* which refers to reef or a part of the sea just below the surface composed of rocks or sand. Generally, most migrant fishers would utter *bawra* rather than *bahura*. It clearly shows that the [hu] and [w] are allophones of the phoneme /h/).

### Development of Storybook and Teacher's Guide

An original story book was developed written in translingual format and contextualized to the standards and required competencies in the K to 12 Curriculum Guide and in the Most Essential Learning Competencies by the Department of Education in the Philippines. The storybook is anchored on the content standards, performance standards, and learning competencies embedded in the K to 12 curriculum. Interactive learning activities vis-a-vis assessment activities are embedded in the last few pages of story book to ensure clearer understanding of the readers/learners and to bridge connection of the story to the contextualized competencies.

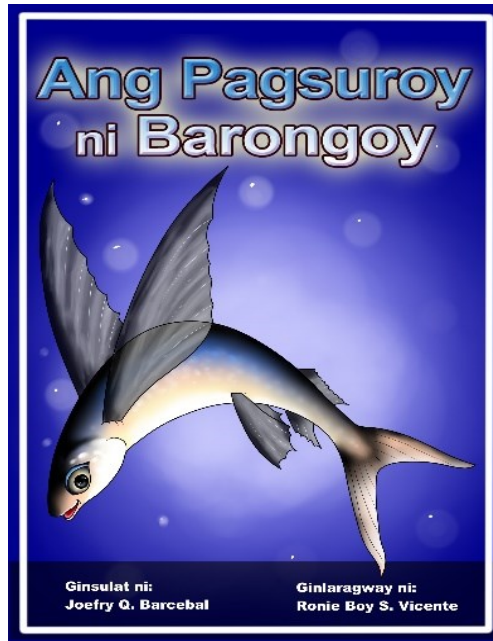


Figure 2. Cover of the storybook, “*Ang Pagsuroy ni Barongoy*”  
(The Journey of a Flying Fish)

The storybook narrates the travails of a fish named Barongoy in one unfateful day which ended tragically. Its plot presents a slice of life at sea depicting the migratory nature of the migrant fishers who have been living from one island to another wherever the waves would bring them to, chasing for *barongoy* or flying fish as their primary source of living. This story underscores the theme aligned with the curriculum guide in Grade Three. A Teacher’s Guide was purposely developed intended to guide teachers regardless of their background, to teach and create meaningful student engagement during the delivery of the lessons using the storybook in their respective learning spaces.

The storybook was evaluated using the adapted Evaluation Rating Sheet for Print Resources of the Department of Education Guidelines and Processes for LRMDs Assessment and Evaluation and West Visayas State University Evaluation Form for Printed Instructional Materials. Three validators who are experts in reading, statistics, and instructional development evaluated the rating sheet rated the storybook as Very Acceptable using Mean. Table 3 presents the result of the evaluation of the storybook.

Table 3: The Evaluation of Storybook

Title	Mean	Descriptive Rating
Ang Pagsuroy ni Barongoy ( <i>The Journey of a Flying Fish</i> )	3.92	Very Acceptable

The result shows that the storybook is culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate, and can be easily and independently used by the Grade Three pupils. Likewise, the evaluation of the teacher’s guide reflects the appropriateness, accuracy, and validity of the learning objectives, subject matter, procedure, and evaluation.

Table 4: The Evaluation of Teacher’s Guide

Teacher’s Guide	Mean	Descriptive Rating
Ang Pagsuroy ni Barongoy ( <i>The Journey of a Flying Fish</i> )	4.85	Excellent

*Note: 4.51-5.00 Excellent; 3.51-4.50 Very Satisfactory; 2.51-3.50 Satisfactory; 1.51- 2.50 Fair; 1.00-1.50 Poor*

An actual demonstration in a Grade Three class in Maybato Elementary School, a public elementary school in the coastal village was conducted. A teacher in the said school who is a Master Teacher 1 utilized the storybook in her Social Studies subject in Grade 3. Pilot test of the storybook is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The storybook and teacher's guide were utilized in a Social Studies subject during the pilot testing in a coastal elementary school in the Philippines.

An observation checklist adapted from the Department of Education in the Philippines was used during the observation of the demonstration. Feedback and comments from the panel and the teachers were considered for further enhancement of the storybook. Incorporation of observations and feedback from the panel, demonstration teacher, and principal during the validation was performed, and these served as bases for revisions as the need may be.

### *Implications, Limitations, and Recommendations*

In cognizance of the findings in this study, implications for theory, practice, and research are advanced. For theory, the crux of funds of knowledge is the underlying assumption that the community of migrant fishers is rich with their cultural beliefs, knowledge and practices, and these daily realities have equipped their children with valuable knowledge and skills at home. If these are embedded in their learning, in various activities as well as in instructional materials in the learning spaces, the disconnection between curriculum and the daily realities will dissipate. Moll (2000) and other colleagues have in fact demonstrated the importance of communities of learners within large cultural and familial networks. Within these networks, the zone of proximal development is manifested in varied manner which underscores knowledge-based and authentic learning advocated by Vygotsky (1986). This narrative ethnographic study analyzed the translingual features present in the narratives of migrant fishers. Taking into account their multilingual nature in which the fusion of three languages mixed or meshed together in their language at home, which clearly implies that this describes that their mother tongue has direct effect on how they communicate in school. Albeit it to say that it implies for miscommunication occurrences at times which may transpired inside the learning spaces in the context of teaching and learning process. This is aligned with the translanguaging pedagogies that according to Garcia (2017) should promote interaction and inclusion, drawing upon what students know individually and collectively. For research, translingual negotiation strategies are quite new in the field as well as in the context of researches in the country. Nevertheless, with the rapid changes in the field of multilingualism due to mobility and existence of translocal spaces in recent times, studies in this area are deemed as important. In particular, pedagogical aspect of translingualism which focuses on how lessons should be taught to diverse set of students with different "home languages" from the existing and mandated lingua franca utilized in instruction most particularly in the elementary

level of education implies for the teacher's knowledge and skill in navigating lessons related to translingual pedagogy.

This ethnographic study limits only on studying the actual translingual practices in the coastal communities most particularly among fishers and members of their family as participants. It does not include the aspect of assessing translanguaging as a pedagogy utilized by teachers inside the classrooms through the conduct of classroom observations in various educational settings in the country.

The study recommends that school heads or principals may establish a support system and provide necessary resources for the teachers in the context of multilingualism. Contextualizing community resources as inputs in the lessons and activities across subject areas in the lessons may be explored by providing opportunities for teachers to explore. Training or seminars may be initiated in the conduct of their in-service training and other related school activities most particularly during the conduct of their Learning Action Cells (LAC) sessions that would further enhance and equip teachers in various pedagogical techniques which are relevant to their diverse learners. The contextualized storybook accompanied with teacher's guide developed in this study may also be utilized in teaching the mother tongue and in social studies subject in the country. Identifying other educational institutions located in coastal communities across the country and testing these instructional materials in various educational settings may be conducted to further validate its effectiveness and alignment to the K to 12 curriculum.

For higher education institutions in the Philippines that offer teacher education programs, specifically the Bachelor of Elementary Education and Bachelor of Secondary Education curricular programs, it should include courses on translingual strategies of communication which may be embedded in the curriculum that will provide formal formation for pre-service teachers to be equipped with innovative and creative ideas on classroom activities that integrate translanguaging activities in various subject areas. Replication of similar studies involving other ethnicities of learners in various schools in coastal communities in different islands in the Philippines may be conducted being an archipelago inhabited by multilingual people.

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# Tracer Study of the MPM Graduates of DWCL Graduate School of Business and Management, Batches 2019 to 2023

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## ABSTRACT

Tracing the graduates of a particular program offering by various higher education institutions across the country is one activity encouraged by the Commission on Higher Education to be conducted regularly. Results of which are evidence that the policies and guidelines set forth by the Commission are adhered to by the HEIs from the perspectives of their graduates. The study traced the graduates in the Master in Public Management (MPM) Program of the Divine Word College of Legazpi (DWCL) Graduate School of Business and Management (GSBM), Batches 2019 to 2023. Utilizing a survey to gather information from all the graduates across batches, their main reason in pursuing advanced education was sought, their employment before and after completing the master's program was described, and the contribution of their completed advanced degree to both their personal and professional growth was determined. The results revealed three main reasons in pursuing advanced studies--personal growth, career advancement and development, and preparation for promotion. A considerable improvement in the managerial and supervisory position levels from 47 to 62% after completing the MPM degree was noted and their salary increase ranged from P5,700 to as high as P50,000 a month. Much improvement of their skills in communication, human relations, critical thinking, problem-solving, research capability, and life-long learning were perceived with a general weighted mean of 4.67; and their overall assessment on the MPM Program offering was "very high" with a weighted mean of 4.77, encompassing the indicators of quality education, competent professors, efficient services provided by the GSBM Office and other support offices, teaching-learning environment, relevance of the curriculum, and library resources.

**Keywords:** Tracer study, DWCL Graduate School, MPM Program

## Introduction

Generally, a tracer study is considered as a map of a particular journey undertaken. It shows how things are and what happens, rather than what should happen. It helps anyone involved to see other people's views and roles. It is also considered as improvement tool since it helps diagnose problems and identify areas for improvement. Tracing what happened over a particular course of action or endeavor will help managers develop strategic techniques for future undertakings.

Graduate tracer studies are surveys mostly used by higher education institutions (HEIs) to follow up their graduates; find out what they are doing with the education and training they received from their Alma Mater (Tanhueco-Tumapon, 2016). It is a follow-up survey of former students with regard to their placement and occupational situation after graduation. It involves not just the graduates but also the employers as the end-users/clients of the graduates. A graduate tracer study is a very powerful tool that can provide valuable information for evaluating the whereabouts and performance of the graduates in the workplace (Cuadra, Aure, and Gonzaga, 2019).

Tracing the graduates helps the school determine what happened to the graduates after graduation. Were they employed in jobs related to their fields of specialization? If not, what have they done to fit into the requirements of their jobs? Were their respective degrees instrumental in earning them enough income to

sustain their families' needs? If not, what measures have they adopted to enhance their earnings? Were the curriculum and their training in the school useful to them in their present work? If not, what recommendations can they offer the school to re-align the curriculum to the needs of the industry?

Answers to these questions are very important to the school in determining its strengths and weaknesses as viewed by their graduates. The positive results may be used in its campaign for more enrolment, and the negative results may be used as basis for improving the present set-up. Hence, conducting tracer studies in the academe is very important most especially in providing quality education. Nobody for that matter can claim that they are producing quality and employable graduates if they do not have any statistics to show that indeed such objective is achieved. This is one reason why tracing graduates becomes a continuing activity done by many schools across various program offerings.

To Schomberg (2003), graduate tracer studies constitute one form of empirical study which can provide valuable information for evaluating the results of the education and training of a specific institution of higher education, which information may be used for further development of the institution in the context of quality assurance. The ultimate impact of an educational training, therefore, will not be known if no follow-ups will be done to trace what happened to the recipients after completing such training, which is why tracer studies are often used within the educational sector (Tracer Studies, n.d.).

Numerous undergraduate tracer studies (Gines, 2014; Almejas, et al. 2017; Dotong, 2016; Cuadra, Aure, & Gonzaga, 2019; Apostol and Sussada, 2022) focused on the employability of their graduates. These studies found that their graduates had high employability rates, ranging from 78 to as high as 96%, suggesting that the respective institutions met the program outcomes embodied in the standard, policies and guidelines set by the Commission on Higher Education. Similarly, their research also revealed that problem-solving, technical, human relations, leadership, and communication abilities were critical to their employment and to the performance of their current positions. Other commonalities covered by their studies were the length of time spent in landing jobs after graduation and their nature of work as well.

In DWCL's setting, various tracer studies had been conducted also by a couple of faculty researchers to determine the employability of the graduates (Nacion, 2006 & 2018; Parillas and Nieto, 2021; Ong, 2021); work placements of the graduates and performance in the licensure examination (Gomez and Labalan, 2021; Garcera, 2021) the graduates' level of satisfaction and perception of their preparedness for their target jobs (De Leon, 2000); work performance of the graduates (Rivero, 2006), among others. The aforementioned studies all delved into the undergraduate programs by HEI's across the country including DWCL. Listed below are some tracer studies conducted involving graduate programs.

Menes (2014) investigated the work- and skill-related variables that influence an individual's employability and advancement, as well as the employment status of five batches of MBA graduates from the Lyceum of the Philippines Graduate School in Batangas City between 2008 and 2012. Findings revealed that the graduates were gainfully employed locally with regular status and holding professional and managerial positions and that the MBA program was very relevant to their respective works.

In two tracer studies (Buenvinida and Yanzon, 2017; Dela Cruz, 2021) that involved a single higher education institution in the Philippines, the descriptive approach was used to describe the characteristics, aptitudes, inclinations, and perspectives of the graduates as well as their work status. According to the former, the majority of respondents (70.6%) with a primary area of expertise in educational management were women, and roughly 60% held Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 positions or equivalent teaching positions. Additionally, approximately 70.6% planned to pursue a doctorate program, and the school's location and reasonably priced tuition were the main factors that attracted them to enroll in the university. Conversely, the latter discussed three of their graduate school's program options and stated that their alumni have a very high employment rate, and that the competences obtained from the program was very much used in their employment and in their personal lives. Their assessment on the graduate program offerings of the school was excellent, nevertheless, they recommended to further improve the graduate school facilities and services, periodically review the curriculum, and continuously conduct capability building activities among professors.



In DWCL, Nacion and Jenkin (2021) also conducted a tracer study which profiled the graduates from the two program offerings covering batches 2011 to 2018 along their gender, civil status, baccalaureate preparation, and parents' education. They discussed their employment history both before and after completing their master's degree, the reasons why they chose DWCL as their graduate school, the impact and value of their advanced degree on their professional and personal development, their opinions of the graduate program offerings, and their suggestions for improving the graduate school's operations. Results revealed that the graduates were mostly married women with academic backgrounds in business and management and coming from homes where parents have tertiary level education. Most of them were employed and working while undertaking their master's degree. They were graduates of local colleges and universities within the region and they chose to enroll DWCL-GSBM because of its reputed quality of education, encompassing the instructional delivery, facilities, social and psychological environment and its accessibility, which information they learned from the alumni who graduated before them. Their advanced degree enabled them to be promoted and consequently, earned higher remuneration.

Notably, employment is one major indicator that measures the relevance of the graduate program taken by the graduates. Upon earning the master's degree, their chances of getting promoted to higher positions in their organizations are high. Upward movements in position equates with an increase in their monthly pay check. It is with this end that the present study delved in so that improvements may be put in effect in the curriculum and services provided by the graduate school to its clientele, the graduate students.

### ***Situs of the Study***

The Divine Word College of Legazpi Graduate School of Business and Management (DWCL-GSBM) initially offered the Master in Business Administration (MBA) Program in 1982. In 1995, the Master in Public Management (MPM) Program was offered and said program was recognized by CHED in 1997. From the GSBM's first master's program graduation in 1985, there has been a progressing increase in the number of graduates across the two program offerings. As of June 2023, the school had already produced 302 MBA and 123 MPM graduates, a total of 425. Of the 425, 62 graduated from the MPM program within the five-year period, 2019-2023.

Since its inception, only one tracer study was conducted by the institution on its graduates from the two Master's Programs, but no study has yet been conducted covering a specific program. As such, this research is the very first tracer study conducted involving a particular master's program offering in the graduate school.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

This study traced the graduates in the Master in Public Management (MPM) Program of the Divine Word College of Legazpi (DWCL) Graduate School of Business and Management (GSBM), Batches 2019 to 2023. A survey was utilized to gather information from all the graduates across batches, who served as respondents of the study. Their main reason in pursuing higher education was sought as well as their reasons for choosing DWCL Graduate School. Their employment before and after completing the master's program was described and its contribution to both their personal and career growth were determined. In addition, their feedback about the MPM program offering, along with their suggestions for improving the program delivery were sought and included in this study.

### **Methods**

The study was descriptive in nature, where a survey method was employed in collecting relevant data and information from the respondents. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were utilized as the data gathered from the survey required so. The participants were the graduates of the MPM program, batches 2019 to 2023. In total, there were 62, which data was requested at the Registrar's office. Of the 62, 58 or 94% responded to the survey.

Survey questionnaires in Google Form were sent to the respondents' FB Messenger accounts in December 2023. The data gathered were processed, collated, tabulated and the results were presented in tables for

easy analysis and interpretation. Frequency count, percentages, and weighted means were used in the analysis and interpretation of the quantitative data while the qualitative data were organized, coded, and presented thematically for easy understanding of the readers.

## Results and Discussion

The results of the data gathered are presented following the sequence of the objectives of the study.

### *Reasons for Taking Master in Public Management Program*

An individual's pursuit of continuously educating himself come in many forms. Presently, there are a lot of avenues that could be utilized to learn anything under the sun, but despite those, the respondents still opted to enroll in the graduate program. Table 1 shows the reasons shared by the respondents when asked why they chose to pursue their master's degree program.

Table 1: Reasons for taking the Master's Degree Program\* (N-58)

Indicators	Frequency	Percentage
Career growth and development	53	91
Personal growth	40	74
Preparation for work promotion	36	62
Influenced by friends/family/superior	18	31
Status and prestige of the degree to profession	12	21
Inspired by a role model	6	10

\*Multiple Response

The top three reasons or motivation for pursuing higher education are: career growth and development followed by personal growth, 74%, and preparation for promotion, 62%. These top three reasons are more developmental in nature, which means that the respondents understand the benefit they will get from earning their master's degree, which may not happen at once but likely to happen in the future. Interestingly, there were a few who were inspired by role models, which could probably be their parents, mentors, and superiors whom they look up to.

### *Reasons for choosing to enroll at DWCL Graduate School*

Of the 58 respondents, 39 or 67% said that DWCL-GSBM was their first choice, while there were 19 or 33% who transferred from other schools. When asked *why they chose to enroll at DWCL Graduate School*, the two groups have the following answers, which were thematically grouped, to wit:

Themes that emerged from the open-ended question	Frequency of Responses	
	DWCL as First Choice:	Transferees:
Alma Matter	9	-
Accessibility/convenient location	5	-
Quality education	8	4
Competent professors	7	4
Good reputation of the school	3	3
Program offering	2	2
Efficient services	2	2
Recommended by superiors & friends	3	4
Total	39 (67%)	19 (33%)

As shown, reasons given by the two groups of respondents were very similar -- quality of education, competent professors, good reputation of the school, the program offering, and the efficient services provided by the graduate school. These findings concurred with the previous findings of Nacion and Jenkin

(2021), which also reported the same indicators as the reasons why students chose to enroll in DWCL Graduate School, including that of the school being their Alma Matter and its accessible location.

### ***Employment Profile Before and After Completing the MPM Degree***

Employment profile in this section includes the employer type, employment status, position level, and monthly salary grade of the respondents.

**Employer Type.** Employer type in this study generally describes the organization where the respondents were working, which is either public or private. Public organizations cover all companies that are operated and managed by the government, while private are those that are run by private individuals or group of individuals. Table 2 shows the employer type of the respondents before and after obtaining the MPM degree.

Table 2: Employer Type (N=58)

Indicators	Before MPM		After MPM	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Private	2	3	3	5
Public	56	97	55	95
Total	58	100	58	100

The results reveal that a greater majority, 97%, were working in public organizations, which is expected since the MPM program was originally designed to cater to those who are working in public offices. A slight change is noted after obtaining the MPM degree as one (1) who was employed in the public office transferred to a private company. When asked, she related that she was offered a managerial position with a higher salary so she grabbed the opportunity.

**Employment Status.** Status of employment pertains to the relationship of the employee to the company which is specifically stated in their contract of employment. Table 3 shows that majority, 94%, were on permanent status, which means that the respondents were already enjoying security of tenure while they were pursuing their graduate studies. These findings validate their reasons stated in Table 1 for taking their masters which are for their career and personal growth and preparation for promotion as educational qualification is major criteria being looked into among employees aspiring for promotion to higher level positions. After obtaining the MPM degree, a significant change is noted, where the contractual and job order status were converted to permanent, an indication that acquisition of their MPM degree really mattered especially on their job security.

Table 3: Employment Status (N=58)

Indicators	Before MPM		After MPM	
	Freq	Percentage	Freq	Percentage
Permanent	54	94	58	100
Contractual	2	3	-	-
Job order	2	3	-	-
Total	58	100	58	100

**Position Level.** Position level in this study pertains to the organization's hierarchical levels where their designated positions fall as presented in Table 4. As shown, close to half, 47%, (12 and 35%) respectively were already handling managerial and supervisory positions while taking their master's program, while more than half, 53%, were handling rank and file level positions. Understandably, the managerial and supervisory level positions in an organization is considerably few compared to rank-and-file level positions and such structure can be seen in the organizational charts among organizations. This means that climbing the upper ladder of the organizational structure entails a lot of preparation on the part of the employee who is aiming for such movement. Looking at the figures in Table 4, it can be inferred that the respondents

value the importance and benefits of equipping themselves with the educational qualification, in this case, the MPM degree to get promoted when the opportunity knocks. True enough, changes in the percentage of their position levels happened after they completed their MPM degree, where there was a total of 31% (9, 7, and 16%) upward movements. With these findings, the 10 listed benefits in career guide (2023) which include: higher salary, advancement opportunities, competitive advantage, networking opportunities, higher education preparation, flexibility, improved personal development, ability to change careers, enhanced credibility in the field, and access to educational resources are likely to be achieved by the respondents sooner or later.

Table 4: Position Level of the Respondents (N=58)

Position Level	Before MPM		After MPM		No. & % of upward movement
	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Managerial	7	12	12	21	5 or 9%
Supervisory	20	35	24	41	4 or 7%
Rank and File	31	53	22	40	9 or 16%
Total	58	100	58	100	18 or 31%

### ***Monthly Salary Level of the Respondents Before and After the MPM Degree***

The monthly salary grade level received by the respondents before and after earning their MPM degree are presented in Table 5. Notably, an extreme salary grade level is revealed in the results, where some were receiving the low salary grade 1 to 6, while only a few were receiving as high as SG 25 before obtaining the MPM degree. An upward movement in salary grade level was noted among some respondents after completing their MPM degree, where 4 were promoted to SG 4; 3 to SG 15; 2 to SG 12, and 1 to SG 9; and 6 more moved to various levels, 19, 14, 11, 10, (See Table 6). These movements in the salary grade levels signify the promotions they got after completing the MPM degree. One respondent was even promoted twice with salary grade movement from 16 to 22 and from 22 to 24 after completing the MPM Program. Another respondent was also promoted twice, however, his salary moved only from SG 22 to 24, but he is now handling high levels of responsibilities in their office. Hence, one of their main reasons in pursuing their master's degree, which is preparation for promotion, were already achieved by some as reflected in the upward movements in their salary grades. They related that their master's degree was very instrumental in the promotion they got from their respective organizations.

Table 5: Monthly Salary Grade Level before and after the MPM Degree (N=57)

Salary Grade Level	Before MPM	After MPM
25 (100K+)	1	1
24		4
22	7	6
19	3	3
18	5	4
16	6	5
15	6	9
14		1
13	2	1
12	3	5
11	6	4
10	2	0
9	7	8
8	3	2
6	1	1
4	1	0
3	1	1
2	1	1

1	2	1
Total	57	57

\* One opted not to answer

As shown in Table 6, 16 of the 57 respondents or 28% have movements in their salary grade after completing the MPM degree at DWCL-GSBM. There are a total 36 upward movements with an average of 2.25 steps. To get the quantitative value of the step movements, the minimum salary grade per level was used as the basis (<https://filipiknow.net/salary-grade>); the average increase in salary received by those who moved upward is P14,743.75. Said amount can be considered very material already as it is more than the monthly salary of a minimum daily wage earner, which receives only a little more than P11,000. These results may continue to entice more students to enroll in the program.

Table 6: Specific Movements in Salary Before and After the MPM Degree (N=57)

Specific Movement in Salary Grades	Peso Equivalent (in terms of monthly salary)	Freq	Upward Step Movement (No. of steps)	Movement in Salary
From SG 22 to 24	From P71,500 to 90,000	3	2	18,500
SG 19 to 22	51,300 to 71,500	2	3	20,000
SG 18 to 22	46,700 to 71,500	1	4	24,000
SG 16 to 22 to 24	39,600 to 71,500 to 90,000	1	6	50,400
SG 13 to 19	31,300 to 51,300	1	6	20,000
SG13 to 14	31,300 to 33,800	1	1	12,500
SG 11 to 15	27,000 to 36,600	3	4	9,000
SG 10 to 12	23,100 to 29,100	2	2	6,000
SG 8 to 11	19,700 to 27,000	1	3	7,300
SG 4 to 9	15,500 to 21,200	1	5	5,700
		$\frac{16}{57} = 28.07\%$	Ave: $\frac{36}{16} = 2.25$ upward movement	Ave increase in monthly salary: P14,743.75

### Perceived Contribution of the MPM Degree to the Improvement of Personal Competencies

Personal competencies in this study pertains to respondents' capabilities in dealing with their day-to-day functions in life as applied in their workplaces and in their immediate and remote environments such as family in particular and the society in general. With a weighted mean of 4.67 overall, the results shown in Table 7 demonstrate a 'very high' contribution to the enhancement of their personal competencies. The top four competency indicators – communication, human relations, problem solving, and research capability – have weighted means of 4.82, 4.78, and 4.74. and 4.66 respectively. These results corroborate the findings of Buenvinida and Yanzon (2017), who reported that among the abilities acquired throughout their studies in higher education were problem-solving, human skills, research competence, and information and technology skills. Their findings on the last indicator, though, information and technology skills, is somehow in contrary to the findings of this study, as it is rated lowest, with a weighted mean of 4.48. Although interpreted as 'high,' still there is a need to look into what possible intervention may be provided to intensify the improvement of said skill. The results could also be due to the age profile of the respondents, where almost 21% were between the age of 50 and 55, which can be construed that they are not techy-literate compared to the young ones.

Table 7: Contribution of the MPM Degree to Personal Competences (N=58)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Communication skills	4.82	Very High
Human relations skills	4.78	Very High
Problem-solving skills	4.74	Very High

Critical thinking skills	4.59	Very High
Research capability	4.66	Very High
Information and technology skills	4.48	High
Life-long learning skills	4.60	Very High
General Weighted Mean	4.67	Very High

Legend: 1.0-1.49 Very low; 1.50-2.49, Low; 2.50-3.49, Moderate; 3.50-4.49, High; 4.50-5.0, Very High

### ***Respondents' Assessment of the MPM Program***

Program assessment involves gathering information from stakeholders, which could be utilized for the further improvement of the existing program offering. The graduates, being the recipients or takers of a particular program are one of the most important sources of relevant information for the same. Table 8 shows the respondents' overall assessment on the listed indicators relative to the program offering of the GSBM is *'very high'* with a weighted mean of 4.77, indicating that their program enrollment expectations were met along quality of education and instruction, as reflected in the competency of the professors, the relevance of the curriculum, library resources, and the teaching-learning environment; the services provided them by the GSBM office, the support offices, and the relationship they observe and develop among the admin-faculty-students were highly achieved. Of all the listed indicators though, the item *'library resources'* was *rated lowest*, 4.67, although still interpreted as *'very high.'* One probable reason for this could be the pandemic that happened, where the library ventured more on the acquisition of e-resources to address the needs of the times.

Table 8: Respondents' Assessment of the MPM Program (N=58)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Quality of instruction	4.74	Very High
Competency of professors	4.76	Very High
Teaching-learning environment	4.72	Very High
Services provided by the GSBM office (Dean and staff)	4.91	Very High
Library resources	4.67	Very High
Relevance of the curriculum	4.72	Very High
professor-student relationship	4.76	Very High
Admin-faculty-student relationships	4.86	Very High
Support services-Registrar, Student Affairs, Accounting, etc.	4.76	Very High
General Weighted Mean	4.77	Very High

Legend: 1.0-1.49 Very low; 1.50-2.49, Low; 2.50-3.49, Moderate; 3.50-4.49, High; 4.50-5.0, Very High

### ***Recommendations for the further improvement of the MPM Program Offering of DWCL***

There was only one recommendation that emerged from the respondents and that is to improve further the discussion of topics for each subject by leveling up the method of teaching especially in areas that require critical thinking analysis and problem solving. They suggested to limit the conventional method of assigning topics to be reported in class and if it cannot be done so, provide supplemental learning activities.

### **Conclusion**

In the pursuit of higher education, the one who takes the opportunity always come out on top. Whatever their reasons or motivations may be in completing their master's degree, they will always emerge on top as education is a valuable asset that cannot be taken away from them. Evidently, there has been a positive change in the position levels and salary grades of the respondents after they completed the MPM degree. Considering that a quite a number of them were recent graduates in 2023, it is reasonable to assume that there is a good chance they will continue to advance in their respective organizations as they themselves believed that their competencies have been greatly improved as a result of taking the MPM program. On the part of the GSBM, the positive feedback given by the graduates and their very high assessment of the

MPM program delivery, will undoubtedly draw more enrollees in the future. Additionally, the recommendation to provide supplemental learning activities will be taken as an input for the GSBM faculty to implement in their respective classes.

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# **The Transformative Power of Technology in Education: Enhancing Accessibility, Engagement, and Personalized Learning Amidst Emerging Challenges**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This article examines how technology significantly influences education by improving accessibility, engagement, and personalized learning, and it also discusses the accompanying challenges. The integration of digital tools and resources has revolutionized traditional educational methods, expanding access for diverse student groups, including those in remote and underserved areas. Technologies such as multimedia, virtual classrooms, and e-learning platforms transform passive learning experiences into dynamic, interactive ones, thereby boosting student engagement. Moreover, technology facilitates personalized learning by providing adaptive learning software and data-driven instructional strategies that cater to individual student needs and learning speeds. This research is based on a comprehensive review of literature and materials encountered by the researcher while addressing challenges faced by students in general due to both limited financial and learning resources. This literature review explores how students' learning endeavors and processes have evolved to adapt to the technological demands that facilitate their educational achievements. Consequently, this article supports the following thesis statement: *“While technology has fundamentally transformed education by improving accessibility, increasing engagement, and facilitating personalized learning, it also presents significant challenges, particularly in ensuring equitable access, managing distractions, and safeguarding privacy.”* This article further highlights the transformative potential of technology to redefine educational practices and outcomes. By integrating technology into education with careful planning and consideration, stakeholders can maximize its advantages while tackling its challenges. This approach leads to more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environments. The future of education depends on using technology to empower students, aid educators, and develop an adaptive, innovative educational system that caters to the diverse and changing needs of students.

**Keywords:** Transformative power, Technology, Accessibility, Engagement, Personalized learning

## **I. Introduction**

In recent decades, technology has revolutionized education, reshaping how knowledge is disseminated and acquired. From the advent of digital classrooms to the rise of e-learning platforms, technological advancements have made learning more accessible, participatory, and personalized than ever before. Students can now explore a wealth of information at their fingertips, collaborate in virtual environments, and experience tailored educational journeys that cater to their unique needs and learning paces. However, this transformation is not without its challenges. Ensuring equitable access to technological resources, managing potential distractions, and safeguarding privacy are pressing concerns that educators and policymakers must address. As we navigate this evolving landscape, it becomes essential to balance the immense benefits of technology with thoughtful strategies to overcome its inherent challenges, ultimately fostering an inclusive and effective educational experience for all learners.

## **Historical evolution of technology in education**

The evolution of technology in education is a testament to humanity's enduring quest to enhance teaching and learning. From the humble beginnings of chalkboards and printed textbooks, the educational landscape has been continuously transformed by technological advancements. Stepping into a classroom in ancient Egypt, students used papyrus scrolls (Dartmouth Ancient Book Labs, 2016) and clay tablets (Høyrup, 1992)

to learn the basics of writing and arithmetic. This was the beginning of educational technology, where simple tools helped lay the foundation for structured learning.

Fast forward to the 15th century, and students find themselves in a bustling print shop, where Gutenberg's revolutionary printing press (History.com Editors, 2018) is at work, printed books transformed education, making textbooks more accessible to the students and parents. In the 1800s, a schoolteacher stands at a blackboard, a new tool that allows for dynamic lessons visible to the entire class (Muttappallymyalil, et al., 2016).

The early 20th century brings the hum of the radio (Fink & Fisher, 2024; Haworth & Hopkins, 2009) and the flicker of film projectors (Fisher, 2022) into the classroom. Educational broadcasts via radio expand learning beyond the school walls, while filmstrips provide captivating visual aids for subjects like science and history.

By the 1950s, the television has found its place in education (Linebarger, 2015) with instructional programs beaming into homes and schools. These programs add a new dimension to learning, offering visual and auditory experiences that engage students in ways traditional methods could not.

As the 1960s and 1970s roll in, classrooms begin to buzz with the arrival of early computers (Russel, 2006). The mainframes and pioneering systems like PLATO, a computer-based education system, introduce students to computer-assisted learning, marking the dawn of digital education (Jones, 2015).

The 1980s and 1990s ushered in a new era with the personal computer (Rourke, 2024). Students and teachers start using Apple IIs and IBM PCs, transforming how lessons are taught and homework is done. The burgeoning internet connects learners to a world of information, and e-learning platforms begin to take shape, offering courses that transcend geographical boundaries.

Entering the 21st century, interactive whiteboards replace chalkboards, turning classrooms into interactive spaces where students can engage with multimedia content (Schoolnet India, 2024). *E-learning* and *Massive Open Online Courses* (MOOCs) revolutionize access to education, making it possible for anyone with an internet connection to learn from top universities.

Today, the classroom is a digital hub, where smartphones and tablets provide learning on the go through educational apps (Suk, 2024). *Artificial Intelligence* tailors learning experiences, while *Virtual and Augmented Reality* create immersive educational adventures (Masero, 2023). Even the way we store and verify educational credentials is evolving with *blockchain technology*.

As we look to the future, these technological advancements promise to continue reshaping education, making it more personalized, inclusive, and engaging. The journey of educational technology, from ancient tools to futuristic innovations, highlights a continuous effort to enhance and democratize learning for all.

### **Overview of Traditional Educational Practices**

In the days of ancient Greece, education is a privilege of the elite. Students gather in open-air forums to engage with philosophers like Socrates, who teaches through probing questions and dialogue (Steiner, 2017). This method, later known as the Socratic method, emphasizes critical thinking and debate as key to learning.

As centuries pass, the medieval classroom takes shape within stone-walled monasteries and early universities. Lectures dominate the educational landscape, where teachers read aloud from sacred or classical texts, and students listen intently, taking meticulous notes. This approach relies heavily on memorization and rote learning, ensuring that knowledge is faithfully passed down from one generation to the next.

By the Renaissance, the rise of humanism encourages a broader curriculum. Students study the *trivium* and *quadrivium*—a classical framework of grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy (Seidel, 2011). Books and lectures remain the primary tools, but there is a growing emphasis on the study of humanities alongside the sciences.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, education begins to become more accessible. Public schools emerge, with classrooms organized in a hierarchical fashion. Students sit in neat rows, facing the blackboard where a single teacher delivers lessons to the entire class (Cuban, 1984). Standardized curriculum and strict discipline characterize this era, with education aimed at fostering obedience and uniformity among students.

Teachers wield textbooks, which become the cornerstone of learning, providing structured content for a wide range of subjects. Students are often assessed through written examinations, and success is measured by the ability to recall and apply learned material accurately.

This era also sees the development of educational theories by pioneers such as John Dewey (1938) and Maria Montessori (1912), who advocate for experiential learning and child-centered approaches. Despite these progressive ideas, traditional practices of direct instruction and formal assessment continue to dominate mainstream education.

In traditional classrooms, learning is largely teacher-centered, with the instructor as the primary source of knowledge. The teacher imparts information, while students absorb and reproduce it, often through repetitive exercises and drills. The focus is on preparing students to meet societal standards and norms, with little room for individual exploration or creativity.

### **How Technology Transforms Education and Learning?**

Technology has become a major force in reshaping education and learning, fundamentally changing how knowledge is accessed, delivered, and experienced. This shift moves away from conventional, teacher-centered models to more dynamic, student-focused methods that use digital tools to improve the learning process. Interactive learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and multimedia resources offer students enhanced educational experiences that go beyond geographic and time constraints. These innovations facilitate real-time collaboration, provide immediate access to extensive information, and offer personalized learning experiences tailored to learner individual's needs and preferences.

Walking into a 21st-century classroom, students are not confined to rows of desks but instead gather around interactive screens (Vargas-Madriz, 2018). The teacher, no longer just a source of information, becomes a guide who facilitates explorations into the vast digital world. This scene illustrates the profound transformation technology has brought to education and learning.

**The Rise of Digital Tools.** The chalkboard, once a classroom staple, has given way to the interactive whiteboard, a digital canvas that brings lessons to life with vivid images, videos, and dynamic content. Students interact with the board, manipulating data, solving problems, and even engaging in virtual simulations. Tablets and laptops have replaced notebooks, giving students instant access to a world of information and educational resources at their fingertips (Chander & Arora, 2021).

**Personalized Learning.** Technology enables learning to be customized to individual needs. Adaptive learning systems assess each student's progress and modify the content's difficulty and type accordingly (Kabudi et al., 2021). For example, a student having trouble with algebra might get extra practice problems and detailed guidance, whereas a student excelling in literature could be given more advanced texts and writing assignments. This personalization allows each learner to advance at his own pace and according to his specific abilities.

**Global Connectivity.** The traditional classroom's limitations have been removed with the rise of the internet. Students from rural areas or different countries can now receive the same quality of education as those in major cities through online courses and *Massive Open Online Courses* (MOOCs). Platforms like *Coursera*, *Khan Academy*, and *edX* provide courses from top universities, making high-quality education available to anyone with internet access. This global connectivity creates a diverse learning environment where students can collaborate with peers worldwide, exchanging perspectives and ideas.

**Interactive and Engaging Content.** Gone are the days of monotonous lectures and rote memorization. Educational apps and games transform learning into an engaging experience, where complex concepts are taught through interactive activities and gamified challenges. Students might learn history by exploring a virtual ancient city or understand physics through building and testing virtual roller coasters. This engagement keeps students motivated and eager to learn.

**Real-World Applications.** *Virtual Reality (VR)* and *Augmented Reality (AR)* bring immersive experiences to education (Studios, 2024). Imagine students donning VR headsets to take a virtual field trip to Mars or to witness historical events unfolding before their eyes. AR apps might overlay digital information onto physical objects, helping students to visualize complex systems or explore anatomy in a three-dimensional space. These technologies provide hands-on experiences that make abstract concepts tangible and relatable.

**Enhanced Collaboration.** Technology promotes collaboration via digital platforms where students can collaborate on projects, share documents, and communicate in real-time, irrespective of their geographical location. Tools like Moodle, Google Classroom, Seesaw, and Slack, for example, create virtual classrooms and discussion forums that enhance group work and peer learning. This collaborative environment mirrors the modern workplace, preparing students for the teamwork and communication skills they will need in their future careers.

**Accessible Learning.** Technology provides exceptional accessibility benefits for students with disabilities. Tools such as *screen readers*, *voice recognition software*, and *adaptive keyboards* allow students with visual, auditory, or physical impairments to participate fully in educational activities. Inclusive design ensures that educational resources and tools are accessible to every student, accommodating diverse learning requirements and advancing educational equity.

**Data-Driven Insights.** Teachers now use data analytics to understand student performance and learning behaviors. These data guide teaching methods, enabling educators to pinpoint areas where students may require extra assistance and adjust lesson plans to better meet class needs. Learning management systems monitor progress and offer thorough feedback, enhancing the transparency and efficacy of the teaching and learning process.

**Lifelong Learning.** Technology has also extended education beyond the classroom and traditional schooling years. Online resources and e-learning platforms allow individuals to continuously acquire new skills and knowledge throughout their lives. Whether it is learning a new language, mastering a software tool, or pursuing professional development, the opportunities for lifelong learning are endless.

### **The Benefits and Challenges of Technology in Education**

**Benefits.** Technology in education is just a powerful tool, transforming the learning landscape with numerous benefits. Engagement soars as students interact with multimedia content—imagine learning history by exploring a virtual ancient city or grasping physics through interactive simulations. Personalized learning paths emerge as adaptive systems tailor lessons to individual needs, allowing students to revisit challenging topics until they grasp them.

Inclusion blossoms as technology bridges gaps, bringing quality education to remote villages and bustling cities alike. Assistive technologies ensure that every student, regardless of physical ability, can engage fully, while online platforms offer a wealth of resources just a click away. Classrooms become collaborative hives, where students from different corners of the globe exchange ideas in real time, enriching their learning with diverse perspectives. Immediate feedback from quizzes and assignments guides students, helping them understand their mistakes and progress faster.

As students navigate digital worlds, they develop skills essential for the future—digital literacy, problem-solving, and the ability to adapt to new technologies. These tools prepare them for a world where technology is integral to every profession, making them not just learners but future innovators.

**Challenges.** Yet, this digital transformation comes with its own set of challenges. Imagine a bright student eager to learn but hindered by poor internet connectivity at home. The digital divide leaves some students behind, unable to access the same resources as their peers. Even in the most advanced classrooms, technology can be a double-edged sword. Devices intended for learning can become distractions, with social media and games pulling students away from their studies.

Over-reliance on screens might erode essential social skills, and technical glitches—like software bugs or hardware failures—can disrupt lessons and cause frustration. Privacy concerns loom large, as personal data collected for educational purposes must be carefully protected against breaches and misuse.

For teachers, the transition is not always smooth. They need training to integrate these new tools effectively, balancing digital and traditional methods to maximize learning outcomes. Schools face financial strains as they invest in technology and keep it updated, with the cost sometimes outweighing immediate benefits.

In this evolving landscape, technology's potential to transform education is undeniable. It offers unparalleled opportunities for engagement, inclusivity, and personalized learning. However, educators and policymakers must navigate its challenges thoughtfully, ensuring that the digital revolution in education benefits all students, leaving no one behind.

Thus, the following thesis statement: *"While technology has fundamentally transformed education by improving accessibility, increasing engagement, and facilitating personalized learning, it also presents significant challenges, particularly in ensuring equitable access, managing distractions, and safeguarding privacy."*

### Theoretical Framework

**Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)** (Davis, 1986). This model elucidates how individuals begin to accept and utilize technology. It emphasizes perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as key factors driving adoption. Within the educational sphere, TAM aids in comprehending how teachers and students embrace educational technologies and incorporate them into their learning activities (Davis, 1993).

**Constructivist Learning Theory** (Jean Piaget, 1896-1980). This theory suggests that learners build their understanding and knowledge of the world through their experiences and subsequent reflections. Technology aids this process by offering interactive and engaging tools that promote active learning and critical thinking (Brau, 2020).

**Connectivism.** This learning theory, introduced by George Siemens (2004), highlights the significance of social and cultural contexts in learning and underscores the importance of networked learning. Technology, particularly the internet, enables the creation of learning networks where students can tap into a wide range of resources and collaborate with peers and experts worldwide.

**Self-Determination Theory (SDT)** (Ryan & Deci, 1977). This theory focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic motivations driving human behavior. Technology in education can enhance intrinsic motivation by providing personalized learning experiences that cater to students' interests and needs, thus promoting autonomy, competence, and relatedness (O'Hara, 2017).

**Bloom's Taxonomy** (Bloom, 1956; Krathwohl, 2002). This hierarchical model categorizes educational goals and objectives into levels of complexity and specificity. Technology can support higher order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and creation, by providing tools for research, collaboration, and creative expression.

**Digital Divide Theory** (van Dijk, 2006). This theory addresses the inequalities in access to technology and digital resources. Understanding this framework is crucial for addressing the challenges related to equitable access to technology in education.

By integrating these theories, the framework provides a comprehensive understanding of how technology can transform education by enhancing accessibility, engagement, and personalized learning while also addressing the challenges of equitable access, managing distractions, and maintaining privacy.

## II. Technology's Impact on Accessibility in Education

Indeed, technology has revolutionized education by breaking down barriers to learning that once seemed insurmountable. Remote learning has emerged as a cornerstone of modern education, offering students the flexibility to access courses and educational resources from anywhere in the world (Saini, 2024). Online platforms and distance education programs have made it possible for students to pursue degrees and certifications without the constraints of geographical location, fostering a global community of learners (Nolasco, 2022).

For remote and underserved areas, technology has been a game-changer, bringing quality education to regions that previously lacked access to traditional educational resources (Global Education Monitoring Report Team, 2023). Imagine a student in a rural village logging into a virtual classroom, where they can engage with teachers and classmates from across the globe, broadening their perspectives and opportunities.

Inclusive education has also been greatly enhanced by technological advancements. Assistive technologies like screen readers, voice recognition software, and adaptive keyboards empower students with disabilities to fully participate in educational activities, bridging gaps in learning needs and enabling all students, regardless of physical abilities, to succeed in the classroom.

However, the influence of technology on accessibility introduces certain challenges. The digital divide is a major concern, with disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity leading to educational inequalities (Afzal et al., 2023). To address this gap, strategies like government initiatives to broaden

broadband infrastructure in underserved regions, providing subsidies for digital devices, and ensuring digital literacy training for both educators and students are necessary.

### **III. Personalized Learning and Differentiation through Technology**

In today's educational realm, personalized learning has become a revolutionary method, driven by advanced technologies that accommodate the distinct needs and learning preferences of every student. At the core of this transformation are adaptive learning technologies, which deliver customized educational experiences that dynamically adapt to each student's performance and learning speed (Taylor et al., 2021). Imagine a mathematics program that tailors its curriculum, offering extra practice for students who need support and presenting more challenging problems to those who excel, facilitated by intuitive software that monitors progress and adjusts content in real-time.

*Data-driven instruction* has revolutionized teaching practices, leveraging analytics to inform educators about student learning patterns and areas of improvement (Wise, 2019). Through comprehensive *feedback loops* and *progress tracking*, teachers can pinpoint where individual students excel and where they need additional support. This data-driven approach enables tailored interventions and instructional strategies that optimize learning outcomes for every student.

*Blended learning models* represent a seamless integration of traditional classroom methods with digital learning environments, offering flexibility and diversity in educational delivery (Singh, 2023). In *flipped classrooms*, students engage with instructional content online before class, enabling deeper exploration and application of concepts during face-to-face sessions. Hybrid teaching methods combine in-person instruction with online resources, offering students a blended experience that accommodates diverse learning preferences and schedules.

Moreover, personalized learning and differentiation empower students to take an active role in their educational journey. By accessing *digital resources* tailored to their interests and abilities, students can pursue self-paced learning paths and explore topics that resonate with their aspirations. This autonomy fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for learning outcomes, encouraging students to strive for excellence and pursue their academic goals with confidence.

### **IV. Professional Development for Educators: Empowering Teachers for 21st Century Learning**

In today's evolving educational landscape, professional development for educators has become increasingly crucial, particularly in integrating educational technology into teaching methods. Schools offer extensive training programs to help teachers effectively incorporate technology into their teaching. Imagine workshops where educators delve into interactive apps, digital platforms, and cutting-edge software aimed at boosting student engagement and improving learning outcomes.

These professional development efforts not only introduce educators to the latest educational technology advancements but also empower them to use these tools to create dynamic and interactive learning experiences. Teachers learn to design multimedia-rich lessons that cater to diverse learning styles, fostering inclusive and engaging classrooms.

Additionally, access to support and resources is essential in equipping educators with the tools they need for success. Digital teaching tools and educational resources provide teachers with multimedia content, interactive simulations, and online libraries that enrich their curriculum. Imagine a teacher discovering a repository of lesson plans, virtual field trips, and instructional videos that bring subjects to life and spark student curiosity.

As educators engage in ongoing professional development in educational technology and embrace solidly built support systems, they are better prepared to navigate the complexities of modern education.

### **V. Challenges and Considerations in Technology Integration in Education**

As technology continues to reshape the educational landscape, educators and policymakers face a range of challenges and considerations that impact its effective implementation and use.

**Technological Overload** poses a significant challenge as educators strive to strike a balance between integrating technology into their teaching methods and preserving traditional educational approaches. Imagine a classroom where interactive whiteboards and digital tablets coexist with textbooks and hands-on activities. While digital tools offer immersive learning experiences and access to vast resources, educators must ensure that students are not overwhelmed or distracted by excessive screen time. Finding the right balance enriches learning without compromising essential skills and interactions that traditional methods provide.

**Privacy and Security Concerns** are paramount in the digital age, where protecting **student data** and privacy is a top priority (UNESCO, 2022). Educational institutions need to establish strong measures to protect sensitive information from breaches and unauthorized access. Imagine a school investing in secure networks, encryption protocols, and data privacy policies to ensure that digital learning environments remain safe and compliant with regulations. Educators also play a crucial role in educating students about online safety and responsible digital citizenship, empowering them to navigate digital spaces securely and responsibly.

Issues of equity and access underscore disparities in technology availability that contribute to educational inequalities (Miah, 2024). In both urban and rural areas, some students lack reliable internet access or digital devices at home, limiting their participation in online learning. Envision schools launching initiatives like one-to-one device programs, mobile hotspots, or community partnerships to close the digital divide and guarantee all students have equal access to educational resources. Strategies also involve training and supporting educators to integrate technology into their teaching effectively, addressing diverse learning needs and striving for inclusivity.

## VI. Future Directions and Innovations in Education Technology

The future of education is poised at the intersection of technological advancement and innovative pedagogical approaches, paving the way for transformative experiences in classrooms around the globe.

**Emerging Technologies in Education** hold immense promise for revolutionizing learning experiences (Almufarreh & Arshad, 2023). Imagine classrooms where *artificial intelligence (AI)* personalizes learning pathways for each student, analyzing data to tailor educational content and pace. *Virtual reality (VR)* and *augmented reality (AR)* transport students to immersive environments (Studios, 2024), where history comes alive and scientific concepts are explored in three dimensional shapes. Imagine a math lesson where students manipulate virtual objects to understand complex equations or a biology class where they dissect virtual specimens with lifelike realism. Additionally, *blockchain technology* ensures transparent and secure academic records, revolutionizing credentialing, and certification processes.

**Trends in EdTech Development** continue to shape the educational landscape, driven by ongoing research and innovative developments (Suk, 2024). Educational technology companies and research institutions collaborate to refine learning analytics, offering insights into student progress and behavior that inform personalized learning strategies. Imagine researchers pioneering breakthroughs in adaptive learning algorithms that enhance student engagement and retention, or developing cloud-based platforms that facilitate seamless collaboration and content sharing among educators and students worldwide.

*Vision for Future Classrooms* embraces a dynamic evolution in educational practices, envisioning classrooms as hubs of creativity, collaboration, and exploration. Imagine flexible learning spaces where traditional desks give way to interactive surfaces that adapt to various teaching modalities. Teachers seamlessly integrate digital tools into their lessons, leveraging real-time feedback and interactive simulations to engage students in active learning experiences. And a future where global connectivity enables cross-cultural exchanges and virtual field trips that broaden students' perspectives and understanding of the world.

## VII. Conclusion

### **Summary: Embracing Technology in Education**

Technology has significantly altered education by improving accessibility, engagement, and personalized learning. The incorporation of digital tools and resources in classrooms and learning settings has

democratized access to education, overcoming geographical barriers and empowering a diverse range of learners. Interactive learning platforms, adaptive technologies, and virtual classrooms have revolutionized engagement, creating dynamic and interactive learning experiences. Furthermore, personalized learning methodologies utilize data analytics and adaptive software to customize educational experiences according to each student's needs, enhancing comprehension and knowledge retention.

### ***Implications for Stakeholders: Empowering Educators, Students, Policymakers, and Software Developers***

For *educators*, technology presents opportunities to innovate teaching methods, customize learning experiences, and engage students in meaningful ways. Professional development in educational technology equips educators with the skills to leverage digital tools effectively, fostering inclusive and student-centered learning environments.

*Students* benefit from enhanced access to educational resources and personalized learning pathways, preparing them for success in a digitally driven society. By embracing technology, students develop critical thinking skills, collaborate globally, and access diverse perspectives that enrich their learning journey.

*Policymakers* play a crucial role in shaping educational policies that support equitable access to technology, cybersecurity measures, and data privacy regulations. By advocating for infrastructure development and digital literacy initiatives, policymakers ensure that technology enhances educational equity and supports lifelong learning.

*Software Developers* innovate and refine educational technologies, driving advancements in AI, VR/AR, and interactive learning platforms. Collaborating with educators and researchers, software developers create tools that optimize learning outcomes and facilitate continuous improvement in educational practices.

### ***Final Thoughts: Shaping the Future of Education through Technology***

As technology continues to evolve, its role in education will expand, fostering creativity, collaboration, and global connectivity. The future of education envisions **inclusive**, **flexible**, and **interactive** learning environments that empower learners to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Thoughtful integration of technology requires ongoing reflection, collaboration, and adaptation to meet the evolving needs of students and educators alike.

### ***Call to Action: Embrace Innovation and Collaboration***

Educators, policymakers, developers, and stakeholders are called to collaborate in harnessing the transformative potential of technology to advance education. By embracing innovation, fostering digital literacy, and promoting equitable access to technology, we ensure that every learner has the tools and opportunities to succeed.

Together, we can shape a future where technology enriches educational experiences, empowers learners, and prepares them to navigate the complexities of the 21st century with confidence and competence.

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# Are Textbooks Enough? A Critical Look at Academic Collocation Representation in EFL Materials

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## ABSTRACT

Academic collocations (e.g., “key element” and “ultimate goal”) are essential for developing EFL students' ability to write effectively in academic contexts. This study investigated the distribution of academic collocations in a textbook (*Pathways (VN Ed.) (2 Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2* by Vargo, 2018) used by first-year EFL university students. The aim was to assess the textbook's suitability for promoting academic collocation learning. A textbook analysis tool (available at <https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/academic/acl/highlighter/>) was used to identify academic collocations from the Academic Collocation List (ACL) (Ackermann & Chen, 2013). This list was used because previous research (Nguyen & Coxhead, 2023) has shown it to be valuable for pedagogical purposes. The findings revealed a limited variety of academic collocations in the textbook, with only 1.092% of those in the ACL being present. Furthermore, *adjective + noun* and *verb + noun* collocations were more prevalent than other types. These results highlight the need for EFL textbooks to incorporate a wider range of academic collocations to better support students' academic writing development. The implications for textbook design and pedagogical practices are discussed.

**Keywords:** Academic writing, Textbook analysis, Academic collocations

## Introduction

Vocabulary acquisition is one of the most critical aspects of English language learning (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2008; Schmitt, 2002). It includes not only individual words (e.g., “do,” “make”) but also multiword units where words are combined into chunks, such as collocations (e.g., “strong tea,” “heavy rain”). Research has demonstrated that learning collocations significantly benefits EFL learners by enhancing their lexical development (Ellis, 1996) and communicative competence (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993). Mastering collocations helps students move beyond understanding sentences word by word, thereby improving their fluency.

This study focuses on academic collocations, which are commonly used across disciplines in academic settings (e.g., “ultimate goal,” “key element”). It is widely accepted that the frequency of exposure to a collocation influences learners' ability to acquire it. Multiple encounters with a collocation increase the likelihood that it will become part of a learner's active vocabulary (Hill, Lewis, & Lewis, 2000). Despite the importance of collocations in communication, many EFL learners, even at advanced levels, struggle with using them correctly in both oral and written contexts (Nesselhauf, 2005; Molavi, Koosha, & Hosseini, 2014). Previous studies (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Tajalli, 1994) suggest that learners' difficulties with collocations stem from two main factors: (1) a lack of awareness of collocational patterns, and (2) insufficient exposure to these patterns.

Some researchers (Shahrokhi & Moradmand, 2014) argue that the collocational content in textbooks may not be sufficient to meet learners' needs, leading to gaps in their collocational competence (Bahns & Eldaw, 2009). Mastery of collocations is crucial for EFL learners, as it helps them sound more native-like and reduces the foreignness of their speech. Therefore, it is essential to address the challenges learners face with collocations. Textbooks, as Milton and Fitzpatrick (2018) note, play a significant role in students' language intake, and their content can greatly impact learners' interaction with collocations.

Given the lack of studies specifically addressing this issue, the present study aims to analyze the distribution of academic collocations in the textbook *Pathways (VN Ed.) (2nd Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical*

*Thinking 2* (Vargo, 2018). This analysis seeks to provide valuable insights into how effectively this textbook supports students in learning academic collocations.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What is the frequency of academic collocations in the *Pathways (VN Ed.) (2nd Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2* (Vargo, 2018) textbook?
- 2) What types of academic collocations are presented in the *Pathways (VN Ed.) (2nd Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2* (Vargo, 2018) textbook?

## Literature review

### *What are textbooks and why is it essential to evaluate them?*

Textbooks are invaluable resources in the classroom, serving multiple roles that support both teaching and learning. Cunningsworth (1995) identifies textbooks as resources for presenting material, providing learners with practice activities, and serving as reference sources for grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Additionally, textbooks function as syllabi, self-study resources for learners, and essential supports for novice teachers who may lack confidence. Other researchers (e.g., Sheldon, 1988; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994; Richards, 2001) concur, emphasizing the crucial and positive role textbooks play in the teaching and learning of English.

While the benefits of ESL/EFL textbooks are widely acknowledged, some educators express concerns about the limitations of scripted textbook language models and dialogues. These concerns center on the idea that such models may not adequately prepare students for the diverse pronunciation, language structures, grammar, idioms, vocabulary, and conversational rules that they will encounter in real-world settings (Levis, 1999). Critics argue that the scripted and often unauthentic language found in many textbooks can hinder communicative practice, as it may oversimplify the complexities of real-world language use. Furthermore, textbooks can sometimes present inaccurate or unrealistic portrayals of the target language society, which can be especially problematic for students who are preparing to enter that community or engage in significant real-life interactions with native speakers. This misrepresentation can lead to students developing skewed or misleading expectations about the target language and culture.

Evaluation is a fundamental component of the teaching and learning process. Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1994) assert that “evaluation is an intrinsic part of teaching and learning.” It plays a critical role in ensuring that the educational materials align with the needs of the learners and the goals of the teaching program. Cunningsworth (1995) advises that “careful selection [of textbooks] should be made to ensure that the materials selected closely reflect the needs of the learners and the aims, methods, and values of the teaching program.” Evaluating textbooks is also important for teachers' professional development, as Ellis (1997) suggests. Through evaluation, teachers can move beyond superficial assessments and gain systematic and contextual insights into the nature of the textbook material.

### *What are academic collocations and why are they important?*

Depending on the context of language use, the term “collocation” can be defined in various ways and categorized into general, academic, or technical types (Henriksen & Westbrook, 2017). This study focuses on academic collocations, such as “scientific research” and “significant number,” which are frequently used across disciplines in academic settings. Academic collocations are defined as the most common multiword units in academic texts (Biber & Barbier, 2007) and include both lexical and grammatical collocations. Lexical collocations involve two content words (i.e., verbs, nouns, adjectives, or adverbs), such as “conceptual framework” (adjective + noun) or “change dramatically” (verb + adverb). Grammatical collocations, on the other hand, include at least one function word, such as prepositions, pronouns, or conjunctions, as in “and respectively” (conjunction + adverb) or “rely on” (verb + preposition).

Collocations are a typical feature of language (Hill, 2000) and can account for up to 80% of written texts (Hill, 2003, p. 82), making them an integral part of native speakers' linguistic competence. To use language

more natively, ESL/ EFL learners need to acquire knowledge of collocations. The literature suggests that incorporating collocations into listening, speaking, reading, or writing activities can enhance learners' thinking speed and communication efficiency (Hill, 2000, p. 54).

Several lists of academic collocations have been created to support pedagogical practices (e.g., Durrant, 2009; Chon & Shin, 2013; Ackermann & Chen, 2013). For this study, the Academic Collocation List (ACL) (Ackermann & Chen, 2013) was utilized due to its association with online tools and its reliability as a pedagogical list, as highlighted by Nguyen and Coxhead (2023). The ACL was constructed using the Pearson International Corpus of Academic English (PICA-E) and received input from English teaching experts to ensure the selected collocations would be beneficial for English learners. The ACL provides coverage of approximately 1.4% of words in academic English, based on the source corpus used in Ackermann and Chen's (2013) study. In contrast, these collocations only account for 0.1% coverage in a general corpus, emphasizing their significantly higher frequency in academic English compared to general English.

### ***Why is it necessary to evaluate the occurrences of academic collocations in the textbook?***

The frequency of word recurrence is one of the most reliable indicators of processing effectiveness in word recognition analyses (Brysbart, Mandera, & Keuleers, 2018). According to the word frequency effect (Monsell, Doyle, & Haggard, 1989), high-frequency words are processed more quickly and are more widely recognized than low-frequency words. Similarly, the frequency with which learners encounter a collocation can significantly impact their ability to acquire it. Multiple exposures to a collocation may be necessary to enhance the likelihood of it becoming part of a learner's active language competence (Hill, Lewis, & Lewis, 2000). This repeated exposure is especially beneficial for challenging collocations, such as verb-noun lexical collocations (Liu, 2002; Shih & Wang, 2006).

Textbooks are a primary source of language input for learners, and students' exposure to collocations often depends heavily on the content presented in these materials. Given that learners spend a considerable amount of class time engaging with textbooks (Young & Reigeluth, 1988), and that EFL teachers closely follow textbook contents in their instruction (Chen, 2000; Hsu, 2004), the role of textbooks in language classrooms is undeniably significant. Consequently, evaluating the coverage of academic collocations in textbooks is crucial for understanding the extent to which students are exposed to these important language units. This analysis can provide insights into the effectiveness of the textbook in facilitating students' acquisition of academic collocations, which are essential for developing their academic writing and overall language proficiency.

## **Methodology**

### ***Textbook description***

The textbook evaluated in this study, *Pathways (VN Ed.) (2 Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2* by Vargo (2018), is currently used in a first-year English Integrated Skills course at a university in Vietnam. This course emphasizes reading and writing skills, and the textbook is structured into ten units spanning 230 pages. The study's analysis encompassed all written texts within the textbook.

*Pathways* aims to develop language skills, critical thinking, and learning strategies through structured sessions. It prepares students to function effectively and confidently in academic settings by using authentic and relevant content from National Geographic, including videos, charts, and infographics. The textbook provides clear student writing templates and guided online writing exercises to help students become more proficient and confident writers. Additionally, the Expanded video "Viewing" sections offer extra text to facilitate practice with integrated skills, while "Vocabulary Extension" activities enhance reading and writing fluency by covering word forms, collocations, affixes, phrasal verbs, and more. The textbook also includes exam-style assignments to help students prepare for various international exams, such as the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

To prepare the textbook for analysis, it was carefully cleaned. This process involved two main steps: a) converting the textbook from PDF to TXT files, and b) verifying the converted text to ensure that no spelling errors or typos were introduced during the conversion.

### ***Data collection and analysis***

This study aimed to quantify the quantity and frequency of academic collocations and their types within the textbook, in alignment with the research objectives. The analysis included all written content, such as headings (e.g., "Developing reading skills"), instructions, exercises, and other textual elements. According to Webb, Newton, and Chang (2012), even if collocations are not explicitly highlighted in texts, they can still be encountered incidentally, contributing to learners' exposure. Since textbooks are a primary source of target language input for EFL learners, all occurrences of collocations within the textbook were thoroughly considered (Tsai, 2015).

For the analysis of academic collocations using the Academic Collocation List (ACL) developed by Ackermann and Chen (2013), the following procedure was employed:

1. Each text from the *Pathways* textbook was individually input into the EAP Foundation website (<https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/academic/acl/highlighter/>), where ACL items were automatically highlighted in the text.
2. The highlighted collocations were manually counted and double-checked multiple times to ensure accuracy in frequency and range.
3. The proportion of ACL items present in the textbook was calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{The number of ACL items found in the textbook}}{\text{The total number of words in the textbook}} \times 100\%$$

### **Findings**

#### ***The frequency of occurrence of the academic collocation throughout the Pathways (VN Ed.) (2 Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2 Textbook***

In response to the first research question, an analysis of the textbook using the ACL (Ackermann & Chen, 2013) revealed that 130 out of a total of 2,469 ACL items (5.26%) appeared within the text, with a total of 193 occurrences (see Appendix 1). The calculated proportion of ACL items in the textbook was 1.092%. In line with Ackermann and Chen's (2013) study, where academic collocations accounted for approximately 1.4% of an academic corpus, the current analysis revealed that the textbook contains ACL items at a rate of 1.092%. Although slightly below the 1.4% benchmark, this proportion still reflects a moderate presence of academic collocations, suggesting that the textbook offers a balanced but not exhaustive representation of these lexical items. Therefore, the textbook can be considered to have an adequate selection of academic collocations, as it closely aligns with established coverage rates in academic discourse.

The moderate presence of ACL items implies that while the textbook introduces students to a variety of academic collocations, there is room for more extensive inclusion. The proportion (1.092%) suggests that educators seeking to offer richer exposure might consider supplementing the textbook content. This would help ensure that learners encounter these collocations more frequently, which is crucial for developing a deeper understanding and ability to use them in academic contexts.

An illustrative example is provided below from Unit 4 of the textbook, "Saving our seas: What we eat makes a difference" (p.72), where ACL items are marked in bold. This example demonstrates how academic collocations are embedded within the text, offering students incidental exposure to them. However, the frequency and distribution of these collocations across different units may vary, potentially influencing the effectiveness of this exposure in supporting students' lexical development.

I believe that the next great advance in human knowledge will come not from making new discoveries, but rather, from learning how we relate to our **natural world**. Humans are an essential part of nature, yet most humans do not have a very **strong relationship** with the world around them. I have dedicated myself to helping people understand our place on this planet through the foods that we eat.

## Collocation list

Sorted by type

**adjective + noun:** natural world, strong relationship

**adverb + adjective:** none

**adverb + verb:** none

**adverb + verb past:** none

**noun + noun:** none

**verb + adjective:** none

**verb + adverb:** none

**verb + noun:** none

Figure 3: An example of reading text with ACL items marked in bold

### ***Types of academic collocations in the Pathways (VN Ed.) (2 Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2 textbook***

A closer examination of the specific types of academic collocations used in the textbook reveals that adjective + noun and verb + noun combinations were the most prevalent, accounting for 60.77% and 24.61% of the total ACL items found, respectively (Table 1). This distribution suggests that the textbook places a strong emphasis on collocations that describe concepts (adjective + noun) and actions (verb + noun) commonly encountered in academic writing. The focus on these collocation types aligns well with the textbook's aim to enhance students' academic reading and writing skills, as these collocations are integral to constructing clear and precise academic texts.

Table 1: The number and percentage of academic collocation types in *Pathways (VN Ed.) (2 Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical 2* textbook

Collocation type	Number	Percentage
adjective + noun	79	60.77%
adverb + adjective	2	1.54%
adverb + verb	2	1.54%
adverb + verb past	8	6.15%
noun + noun	2	1.54%
verb + adjective	4	3.08%
verb + adverb	1	0.77%
verb + noun	32	24.61%

While the overall number of unique collocations is moderate, a deeper analysis of the most frequently occurring collocations provides further insights. Table 2 highlights the top seven most frequent academic collocations, with "critical thinking" (64 occurrences), "first draft" (20 occurrences), and "academic skills" (14 occurrences) appearing predominantly in headings throughout the textbook. This pattern suggests a deliberate emphasis on these core concepts, reinforcing their importance to students. However, their lower



frequency within the body text, where students engage with content for comprehension and production, may limit opportunities for deeper lexical acquisition.

. Table 2: Top seven most frequent academic collocations

Rank	Academic collocation	Occurrence
1	critical thinking	64
2	first draft	20
3	academic skills	14
4	Human activities/ human activity	8
5	original text	7
6	solar power	
	unrelated information	6
	natural world	
7	high levels/ high level/ higher levels	
	internet access	
	make a prediction/ makes a prediction/ made a prediction	4
	recent study	
	describing a process	

These findings highlight a potential gap in the distribution of academic collocations, particularly those that are crucial for developing students' academic language proficiency. Although the textbook provides exposure to essential collocations, the frequency and context of their use may not be sufficient to ensure robust lexical development. This underscores the need for supplementary materials or instructional strategies to enhance students' engagement with these collocations across various contexts.

## Discussions

This study was conducted to examine the use of academic collocations in a university-level textbook *Pathways (VN Ed.) (2 Ed.) Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2* by Vargo (2018). The findings revealed that only 130 ACL items, with a total of 193 occurrences, were identified within the text. The frequency of academic collocations was calculated to be 1.092%. The most dominant types of collocations in this textbook were adjective + noun and verb + noun combinations, accounting for 60.77% and 24.61% of the total ACL items found, respectively. Additionally, three of the top seven most frequently used collocations ("critical thinking," "first draft," and "academic skills") were primarily found in textbook headings. Aside from these phrases, the remaining high-frequency collocations appeared fewer than ten times each. In brief, although the textbook primarily focuses on writing skills, the findings revealed a limited range of academic collocations. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive approach to teaching academic collocations to EFL students. Such an approach could enhance students' fluency and accuracy in academic writing, ultimately making the learning process more effective.

These findings offer valuable insights for educators, material developers, and students. For educators, the results provide a crucial reference point in textbook selection, emphasizing the role textbooks play in exposing students to language collocations. However, given that the analyzed textbook covered only a limited number of academic collocations, educators should supplement its content with explicit instructional strategies and ample practice opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom. For material developers, the findings highlight the importance of evaluating textbooks based on the frequency of collocation exposure, emphasizing the need for greater repetition to facilitate acquisition. Finally, the study

raises students' awareness of the importance of academic collocations, which present significant challenges for EFL learners. To address these challenges, students should seek additional resources and employ strategies such as using collocation dictionaries, noting collocations learned in class, and immersing themselves in authentic English materials and interactions.

This study acknowledges two important limitations. First, the ACL (Ackermann & Chen, 2013) used for analysis focused primarily on lexical collocations, omitting grammatical collocations that also play a crucial role in language proficiency development. Additionally, the study was constrained by a relatively small sample size, using only a single textbook, which limits the generalizability of the findings to broader EFL learner populations and contexts. Future research involving larger and more diverse samples would provide a more comprehensive understanding of EFL students' knowledge and use of academic collocations. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings and informing future research directions.

Based on the present study's findings, several avenues for future research are suggested. Longitudinal studies are recommended to examine the long-term impacts of different teaching methods on EFL students' collocation acquisition and use. Additionally, analyzing common collocation-related patterns or errors in students' written work could provide valuable complementary insights. Research is also needed to investigate the specific collocation learning needs of distinct learner groups, such as those at varying proficiency levels or from different academic disciplines. Finally, corpus analysis could be employed to explore collocation preferences across diverse academic subject areas, which could then inform the selection and presentation of collocations in EFL instructional materials. Collectively, these recommendations aim to build upon the current study's contributions and further elucidate the complex relationships between EFL students, academic collocations, and effective pedagogical approaches.

## Conclusion

This study analyzed the use of academic collocations in a university textbook, revealing that the textbook contained only 130 academic collocation items with 193 total occurrences, amounting to just 1.092% of the entire text. The most common types of collocations were adjective + noun and verb + noun, which together accounted for over 85% of the total collocations identified. While three of the top seven most frequently used collocations were found in textbook headers, the remaining high-frequency collocations appeared fewer than ten times. Despite the textbook's focus on writing skills, the limited range of academic collocations underscores the need for a more comprehensive approach to teaching these essential language elements to EFL students. Implementing such an approach could significantly enhance students' fluency and accuracy in academic writing, thereby improving the overall effectiveness of the learning process.

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## APPENDIX

The quantity, types, and frequency of academic collocation items in *Pathways: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking 2 textbook*

Number	Academic collocation	Type	Frequency
1	academic skills	adjective + noun	14
2	critical thinking	adjective + noun	64
3	strong link	adjective + noun	1
4	make available	verb + adjective	1
5	high levels/ high level/ higher levels	adjective + noun	4
6	having access/ have access	verb + noun	3
7	minimum standard	adjective + noun	2
8	closely connected	adverb + verb past	1
9	roughly equal	adverb + adjective	1
10	social interaction	adjective + noun	1
11	greatly increase	adverb + verb	1
12	financial support	adjective + noun	2
13	easy access	adjective + noun	2
14	scientific research	adjective + noun	3
15	significant number	adjective + noun	1
16	interpersonal relationships	adjective + noun	1
17	main findings	adjective + noun	1
18	natural world	adjective + noun	6
19	equal access	adjective + noun	1
20	presents the argument	verb + noun	1
21	first draft	adjective + noun	20
22	unrelated information	adjective + noun	6
23	share information	verb + noun	3
24	solar power	adjective + noun	6
25	solar panels	adjective + noun	2
26	solar energy	adjective + noun	2
27	increase awareness	verb + noun	1
28	valuable resources	adjective + noun	1
29	receive treatment	verb + noun	1
30	clearly understand	adverb + verb	1
31	widely available	adverb + adjective	1
32	common goal	adjective + noun	1
33	specific examples	adjective + noun	1
34	collect information	verb + noun	1
35	professional experience	adjective + noun	2
36	modern society	adjective + noun	2
37	common culture	adjective + noun	1
38	provide information	verb + noun	1
39	internet access	noun + noun	4
40	traditional culture	adjective + noun	1
41	newly created	adverb + verb past	1
42	brief summary	adjective + noun	1
43	virtual community	adjective + noun	1
44	local community/ local communities	adjective + noun	2
45	make a prediction/ makes a prediction/ made a prediction	verb + noun	4
46	Essential Elements	adjective + noun	1
47	additional information	adjective + noun	1
48	becomes available	verb + adjective	1
49	common characteristics	adjective + noun	2
50	Human activities/ human activity	adjective + noun:	8
51	major factor	adjective + noun	1
52	greatly reduced	adverb + verb past	1
53	IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS	verb + noun	1
54	support their argument	verb + noun	1
55	faced difficulties	verb + noun	1
56	make an impact	verb + noun	1

57	negative effect/ negative effects	adjective + noun	2
58	environmental issues	adjective + noun	2
59	negative impacts	adjective + noun	1
60	direct impact	adjective + noun	1
61	little impact	adjective + noun	1
62	strong relationship	adjective + noun	2
63	directly linked	adverb + verb past	1
64	positive impact	adjective + noun	1
65	remained stable	verb + adjective	3
66	Applying a method	verb + noun	3
67	cultural heritage	adjective + noun	1
68	complex set	adjective + noun	1
69	store information	verb + noun	1
70	personal quality	adjective + noun	1
71	draw a line	verb + noun:	1
72	physical activity/ physical activities	adjective + noun	3
73	recent study	adjective + noun	4
74	reduce stress	verb + noun:	2
75	chemical reactions	adjective + noun	1
76	use a technique/ use techniques	verb + noun	3
77	use the method/ use these methods/ using these methods	verb + noun	3
78	provides an explanation	verb + noun	1
79	key concept	adjective + noun	1
80	making contact	verb + noun	1
81	positive effects	adjective + noun	1
82	medical treatment	adjective + noun	1
83	minimum requirements	adjective + noun	1
84	main argument	adjective + noun	3
86	describing a process	verb + noun	4
87	gather data	verb + noun	1
88	specific information	adjective + noun	1
89	lowest level	adjective + noun	1
90	short period	adjective + noun	1
91	occur frequently	verb + adverb	1
92	main factors	adjective + noun	2
93	final step	adjective + noun	1
94	fully developed	adverb + verb past	1
95	increases the likelihood	verb + noun	1
96	natural process	adjective + noun	1
97	rapid expansion	adjective + noun	1
98	relevant information	adjective + noun	3
99	religious beliefs	adjective + noun	1
100	commonly referred	adverb + verb past	1
101	developed a theory/ develop theories/ developed the theory	verb + noun	3
102	main characteristics	adjective + noun	1
103	found evidence	verb + noun	1
104	closely related	adverb + verb past	1
105	living organisms	adjective + noun	2
106	original text	adjective + noun	7
107	common feature	adjective + noun	1
108	contain information	verb + noun	1
109	rural communities	adjective + noun	1
110	local communities	adjective + noun	1
111	urban areas	adjective + noun	1
112	became aware	verb + adjective	1
113	achieve this goal	verb + noun	1
114	identifies problem	verb + noun	1
115	expert opinions	noun + noun	2
116	direct contact	adjective + noun	1
117	make a living	verb + noun	1

118	rural areas	adjective + noun	1
119	particular area	adjective + noun	1
120	renewable energy	adjective + noun	1
121	legal right	adjective + noun	1
122	makes a contribution	verb + noun	1
123	verbal communication	adjective + noun	1
124	larger range	adjective + noun	1
125	current trends	adjective + noun	1
126	presents a challenge	verb + noun	1
127	Use these strategies	verb + noun	1
128	personal experience	adjective + noun	1
129	similar characteristics	adjective + noun	1
130	Commonly Used	adverb + verb past	2
Total	130		193



# Peer facilitation techniques in asynchronous online discussion: A case study of Vietnamese EFL students

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## ABSTRACT

Asynchronous online discussion forums have been widely used in blended learning courses at universities. Attempts have been made to increase students' participation in asynchronous online discussions. Among these, previous research has focused their attention on promoting the roles of instructor facilitators and student facilitators. While there are a considerable number of empirical studies related to instructor facilitation, merely several studies have been conducted in online peer facilitation. This paper reports a qualitative study examining the techniques that Vietnamese learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) employed to encourage online interaction in a blended learning course. A case study approach was adopted in this study. Data were collected from online postings of 42 Vietnamese EFL students in an English Integrated Skills course. A student facilitator was deemed to be successful in attracting their peers' interaction in online discussions if the discussion threads had a depth of six or more levels of students' postings. 18 threads were found to achieve such a depth. These threads were then examined in detail to find out the facilitation techniques employed by the student facilitators. The data were analysed using a constant-comparative approach. The findings revealed nine facilitation techniques, among which the two most frequently used were questioning for viewpoints or perspectives and giving personal opinions and experiences. Finally, practical suggestions for practice and future research were stated.

**Keywords:** Peer facilitation techniques; Student facilitation; Online discussion; Asynchronous forums; Interaction

## 1. Introduction

Among the numerous technological tools that have been employed in the educational landscape in recent years, asynchronous online discussion forum has proved to be effective in promoting students' interaction, exchanging of ideas and knowledge construction (Hew & Cheung, 2008; Hew & Cheung, 2011; Ng et al., 2012). An asynchronous online discussion forum is defined as “a text-based human-to-human communication via computer networks that provides a platform for the participants to interact with one another to exchange ideas, insights and personal experiences” (Hew & Cheung, 2003, p. 249). This technological tool has been increasingly incorporated into blended courses and onsite/on-campus educational settings to expand learning activities beyond the traditional classroom's time and space (Hew & Cheung, 2008; Xie et al., 2006).

Asynchronous online discussion forum is of great value for students' learning as it enables students to engage in discussion of certain topics at any time from any different geographical location. Other benefit includes facilitating students' expression and reflection. Since these forums as mainly text-based, it is conducive for students to explicitly express their thoughts in writing. Furthermore, the writing process typically requires students' reflection, which could result in the development of students' capabilities to analyse, synthesise, and evaluate information as well as think precisely (Newman et al., 1997).

Given the affordances of asynchronous online discussion, students' limited interaction in online discussion appears to be a persistent problem (Hew & Cheung, 2008; Hewitt, 2005; Ng et al, 2012). Some students never took part in discussion whereas others contributed very few posts (Cheung & Hew, 2004). The posts were simply questions and answers about certain issues rather than discussing or exchanging opinions

(Cheung & Hew, 2005). It is therefore pivotal to seek for measures to engage and sustain student participation in these discussions.

A suggested method focuses on the role of instructor facilitator in online discussion. This strand of research has received great attention from researchers with an extensive number of studies conducted into the roles of instructors as well as the techniques instructors employed to facilitate online discussion. Another line of research has emphasized the significance of student facilitator. Peer facilitation has been indicated to result in a greater degree of interaction (Gilbert & Dabbagh, 2005) and more responses (Rourke & Anderson (2002). Students felt greater freedom in raising their opinions and brainstorming or challenging other's ideas (Baran & Correia 2009; Hew, 2015), possibly due to the lateral relationship of peer facilitation (Cheng & Cheng, 2019). However, there has been limited research into peer facilitation in online discussion forums (Hew & Cheung, 2008; Ng et al., 2012). The types of facilitation techniques that student facilitators employed also need further attention (Ng et al, 2012). Thus, it has been widely agreed among scholars that further studies into peer facilitation need to be conducted (Baran & Coreia, 2009, Hew, 2015).

## **2. Literature Review**

Prior research has indicated an improvement in students' interaction without the instructor's participation in online discussion (Mazzolini & Maddison 2003, MacLean, 2004). The number of postings and their length were reported to increase, and deeper discussion threads were observed in peer-facilitated online discussions (Gilbert & Dabbagh, 2005; Poole, 2000). A discussion thread is a hierarchically structured collection of messages, which contains the one that started the discussion and the replies to this initial message (Hewitt, 2005). This unique feature of asynchronous online discussion is easily recognizable, helping participants track the progression of a conversation (Hewitt, 2005). Additionally, student facilitator was rated higher in their ability to promote effective online discussion as their involvement invited more responses (Rourke & Anderson, 2002) and created an atmosphere for student involvement and commitment (Baran & Correia, 2009).

Nevertheless, some researchers showed that peer facilitation might not be an effective pedagogical method as confident contributors could dominate the discussion and make other participants feel excluded (Braham & Piela, 2009). Peer-facilitated asynchronous online discussion might not be useful for low order learning objectives, which mainly involve recalling facts and demonstrating basic understanding (Rourke & Anderson, 2002). Generally, there have been conflicting views among researchers regarding the use of this technique (Ng et al., 2012). Furthermore, the majority of research studies found mainly focused on the Western setting. These gaps indicate a need for further research on peer facilitation in a different context.

A few studies have delved into the techniques that student facilitator employed in improving interaction in asynchronous online discussion (Hew & Chung, 2008; Ng et al., 2012). These studies have delineated some types of peer facilitation techniques in active forums. Nevertheless, these studies were restricted to postgraduate students with a modest sample of participants (under 20), which could affect the generalizability of the result. Additionally, asynchronous online discussion was designed based on tasks, which involved posting comments on students' proposal written for the course (Ng et al., 2012) or it was implemented in instructional technology type class, i.e., for students who were trained to be educators (Hew & Cheung, 2008). In fact, these scholars called for further research to be conducted with undergraduate participants, with larger sample, and in classes with other disciplines or with non-designed-based tasks for online discussion forum. In response to these, the present study extends this line of research in a different context, which is in an Asian country with undergraduate participants in a blended course for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. The present study is to examine the facilitation techniques that student facilitators adopted to engage and sustain interaction in asynchronous online discussion forums in the course.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research design**

An exploratory case study involving constant-comparative approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was adopted for this study as it enables the exploration of relevant behaviours in a real-life setting (Yin, 2003), which refers to the use of peer-facilitation technique in this context. Additionally, the use of case study facilitates an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Merriam, 2001).

Data was collected from 42 Vietnamese undergraduate students, who were enrolled in an English skill integrated course at University of Foreign Language Studies, the University of Danang, Vietnam. This required course was a blended course involving 2-hour face-to-face weekly meeting and an online learning component including asynchronous online discussion sections. The asynchronous online discussion forum was incorporated into the course as an opportunity for learners to increase interaction, which was typically limited in classroom due to large-class size. Furthermore, learners could be involved in expressing their opinions on issues related to the course's content with the main purpose of improving their language proficiency, rather than completing a required task for the course. All the students had internet access at home.

#### **3.2. Data collection**

The data collection followed the procedure set out in Hew & Chung's study (2008). All the students had the opportunities to act as facilitators and students in the course. They participated in three discussion forums about three different topics in the course, each lasting one week. The first discussion topic occurred during the sixth week of the course, the second topic during the ninth week, and the third took place during the twelfth week. In each discussion topic, there were seven groups of students with six students in each group. In each topic of the discussion, two students from each group were randomly chosen as facilitators. Those who served as facilitators in the previous weeks would not be assigned as facilitators again. All groups had the same discussion topics and the same learning goals.

The first topic of the discussion focused on "Is tourism beneficial to an environment? Should tourism be banned in order to protect the environment?". The second centred on "Do you need to have a college degree to get a good job?". The third topic was on "St. Augustine said: 'The World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page.' What does this mean? Do you agree?"

#### **3.3. Data analysis**

For the purpose of this study, the depth of threads of discussion was examined to explore the extent of student facilitator's success in attracting student participation in online discussion forums. A student facilitator was deemed to be successful when the thread had a depth of at least six level of message postings (Hew & Cheung, 2008) as the major goal of an asynchronous discussion forum is to promote the ongoing discussions or dialogues among its participants (Hewitt, 2005). Another purpose of probing the threads is to classify the facilitation techniques that the successful facilitators employed in sustaining the interaction. Each online post was thoroughly reviewed and coded for peer facilitation techniques, using an initial list of categories derived from the literature on facilitation techniques (Hew & Cheung, 2008; Ng et al., 2012). Although the analysis was grounded on the predetermined categories, efforts were made to ensure that these categories did not limit the identification of new peer facilitation techniques, allowing new techniques to emerge inductively during the coding process. The list of peer facilitation techniques and examples was continuously refined. Newly derived data was compared with the techniques formulated to identify similarities and differences, and consistencies. The online discussion transcripts were re-coded until the list was finalized. Even though I was the only coder of data, I worked in similar condition when coding each time and no confounder occurred that could change my coding practice throughout the analysis process.

This practice assures intra-coder reliability, referring to “the consistent manner by which the researcher codes” (Hoonard, 2008, p.446).

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Level of student involvement

Eighteen threads with the depth of six or more levels were found. The percentage of group members contributed to the 18 threads were presented in Table 1. All group members participated in discussion threads that achieved a depth of six, seven, eight, twelve, sixteen and eighteen. 84% of group members contributed to the threads with the depth levels of six, seven, ten and seventeen whereas 67 % of students mainly contributed to threads that achieved depths of six, eight and ten levels. It can be seen that the level of student involvement in the threads with deeper level was reasonably high.

Table 1. Percentage of students who contributed to the 18 threads

Depths of thread	Week and Group	Percentage of group members who contributed
18	Week 12 Group 4	100
17	Week 12 Group 1	84
16	Week 6 Group 1	100
12	Week 6 Group 4	100
10	Week 9 Group 4	84
10	Week 9 Group 6	84
10	Week 9 Group 5	67
8	Week 9 Group 3	67
8	Week 9 Group 6	67
8	Week 6 Group 1	100
7	Week 6 Group 2	100
7	Week 6 Group 6	84
7	Week 6 Group 7	67
6	Week 9 Group 1	67
6	Week 9 Group 6	67
6	Week 9 Group 7	84
6	Week 9 Group 1	100
6	Week 12 Group 5	67

### 4.2. The depth of the threads

An example of an eight-level deep thread was shown in Figure 1. Noticeably, there were signs of conversation exchanges or knowledge construction rather than simply questions and responses between participations in deep-level threads. This finding corroborated with Hew & Cheung’s (2008), which posited that a six-level deep thread showed signs of sustained or extended discussion.


## Discussion Room 2

### Is tourism beneficial to an environment?

⚙️ SETTINGS ▾

SHOULD TOURISM BE BANNED IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT? ▸


Display replies in nested form ▾ Move this discussion to ... ▾ **MOVE**



**Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA03 Lâm Yên Xuân - Friday, 15 March 2024, 9:25 AM

While the tourism industry brings both benefits and drawbacks to the environment, I firmly believe that the negative effects outweigh the positive ones. For example, a high number of tourists can lead to environmental degradation, including damage to natural habitats, pollution, and increased waste. As a result, popular destinations may struggle to manage the environmental impact of mass tourism.


[PERMALINK](#) [EDIT](#) [DELETE](#) [REPLY](#)



**Re: Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA02 Nguyễn Cẩm Ngoc - Friday, 15 March 2024, 9:32 AM

But I also think that its benefits would prevail over the drawbacks. As it could raise the public awareness about the protecting our surrounding environment. To illustrate, when visiting a tropical climate and experience its beauty, humans could fall for that landscape and would like to protect it. What do you think @Khanhdoan


[PERMALINK](#) [SHOW PARENT](#) [EDIT](#) [SPLIT](#) [DELETE](#) [REPLY](#)



**Re: Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA03 Lâm Yên Xuân - Friday, 15 March 2024, 9:52 AM

As I said, tourism has its own benefits in terms of environment. In your case, I think the tourists' desire to protect the landscape might not adequate, we also need the awareness from the locals and businesses as well as the government's environmental regulations. They have to cooperate effectively to improve the ecosystem and preserve the nature.


[PERMALINK](#) [SHOW PARENT](#) [EDIT](#) [SPLIT](#) [DELETE](#) [REPLY](#)



**Re: Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA03 Lâm Yên Xuân - Friday, 15 March 2024, 11:44 AM

Yes, it's just a tip of the iceberg. But I believe that if the local authorities boost tourism, attract more tourists and turn the places into well-known destinations, there would be more funding poured in for natural conservation and the preservation of natural sites. @Myle and @Baochau, do you agree with me?


[PERMALINK](#) [SHOW PARENT](#) [EDIT](#) [SPLIT](#) [DELETE](#) [REPLY](#)



**Re: Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA03 Lâm Yên Xuân - Friday, 15 March 2024, 7:22 PM

To reply what Ngoc said, I think that if there were no tourists, the nature would not be harmed and would not need conservation. So the point that tourism would bring in more money to protect and preserve the environment is not quite correct. It brings in money to fix the problem it has created


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**Re: Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA03 Lâm Yên Xuân - Friday, 15 March 2024, 8:40 PM

Actually, Xuan perspective is more convincing to me that the impact of tourism on the environment is often more harmful than beneficial. For instance, popular tourist destinations often face overcrowding, leading to the degradation of natural habitats. Construction of hotels, resorts, and other infrastructure can encroach upon sensitive ecosystems, leading to habitat loss and fragmentation. This disruption can have devastating effects on local flora and fauna, threatening biodiversity.

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**Re: Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA03 Lâm Yên Xuân - Sunday, 17 March 2024, 6:45 AM


I agree with you guys perspectives on both positive and negative aspects of tourism on the environment because tourism is a multifaceted industry that serves as a double-edged sword. From my opinion, I deem the drawbacks to surpass the benefits.

About the bright aspects, sustainable tourism can create employment opportunities for local communities, offering incentives for them to protect their natural surroundings and cultural heritage. Moreover, tourism promotes cultural exchange and understanding by bringing people from different backgrounds together.

However, mass tourism can put pressure on local cultures and traditions, leading to commodification, cultural appropriation, and loss of authenticity. Indigenous communities may face challenges preserving their heritage and identity in the face of commercialization and homogenization driven by tourism demand. What even more important that popular tourist destinations often experience overcrowding, congestion, and strain on resources, resulting in environmental degradation, increased pollution, and deteriorating quality of life for residents.

To sum up, it can't be denied the benefits of the tourism regarding to economic and social aspects but the natural is unique and with we cannot restore its state just by investing money, so the awareness of each individual and the policies of the government are crucial.

[PERMALINK](#) [SHOW PARENT](#) [EDIT](#) [SPLIT](#) [DELETE](#) [REPLY](#)



**Re: Is tourism beneficial to an environment?**  
by 21CNA03 Lâm Yên Xuân - Friday, 15 March 2024, 7:50 PM

This is not necessarily true. According to your opinion, you believe that if local authorities boost tourism, attract more tourists, and turn these places into famous destinations, there would be more funding for nature conservation and preservation of natural sites. However, is it easy for that to happen? I don't think so.

Firstly, the cost that localities have to bear for enhancing tourism is quite significant. So, what if it's just small provinces and cities? They will certainly not be able to meet these requirements. Secondly, attracting a large number of tourists will inevitably lead to a significant negative consequence, which is the indiscriminate disposal of waste. It is not uncommon to see waste such as plastic bags, plastic bottles, food wrappers scattered everywhere on the streets nowadays due to tourists and vendors trying to make money at tourist destinations.

Furthermore, the tourist attractions themselves are likely to deteriorate because once they become famous, Vietnamese and international tourists will flock there to check-in and visit. Some individuals may make actions that negatively impact these well-known tourist attraction. We have witnessed numerous cases where people have carved graffiti, defaced caves in Halong Bay, climbed on stone statues to take pictures in temples and tombs in Hue, or littered on beaches in Ly Son Island.

Therefore, I don't believe that tourism will be beneficial for the environment, even though we have measures in place to improve it.

[PERMALINK](#) [SHOW PARENT](#) [EDIT](#) [SPLIT](#) [DELETE](#) [REPLY](#)

Figure 1. Captured screenshot of an eight-level deep online discussion thread

It appears that the topic did not have much influence on the depth of the threads as illustrated in Table 2. All three topics attracted a relatively equal number of postings at deeper levels. This result is inconsistent with Hew & Cheung's (2008), which showed the difference in the depths of the thread among different topic of discussion. The plausible explanation is the difference in the nature of discussion between two studies. Whereas the discussion in Hew & Cheung's study (2008) was more professional-oriented and the topics were specialised, the discussion for this study aimed to enhance interaction among students and their language competence. Thus, the discussion topics were pertinent to general issues in the society.

Table 2. Discussion topic and thread level

Discussion topic	Thread level
First topic – “Is tourism beneficial to an environment? Should tourism be banned in order to protect the environment?”	1 six-level deep
	2 seven-level deep
	1 eight-level deep
	1 twelve-level deep
	1 sixteen-level deep
Second topic – “Do you need to have a college degree to get a good job?”	3 six-level deep
	1 seven-level deep
	1 eight-level deep
	1 ten-level deep
Third topic – “St. Augustine said: "The World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page." What does this mean? Do you agree?”	1 six-level deep
	1 ten-level deep
	1 seventeen-level deep
	1 eighteenth-level deep

#### 4.3. The facilitation techniques

The significant finding of the study is the revelation of nine peer facilitation techniques as displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Peer facilitation techniques

Facilitation technique	Percent	Illustrative Example
Asking questions about viewpoints/ perspectives/ experiences	45	<i>However, tourism activities cause enormous damage to our environment that forces us to act. In your point of view, in what ways we can do to protect our environment while developing tourism?</i>
Giving own opinions or experiences	28	<i>You mentioned a strong foundation from the university. However, I see many graduates struggling to find jobs, and some seem to lack the practical skills needed in the workplace. Can you clarify how the university necessarily provides that strong foundation?</i>
Asking for clarification	7	<i>You said that staying in one place without traveling can result in being "backward." Could you elaborate on what you mean by this and provide examples?</i>
Personally inviting others to contribute	5	<i>In some cases, I think that tourism is beneficial to environment. For example, revenue generated from tourism activities, such as park entrance fees or eco-tours, can provide essential funding for conservation efforts, habitat restoration and protect wildlife. Do you think that tourism is beneficial to an environment? @P @N @P?</i>
Showing appreciation	3	<i>Nice action! Thanks for your post. Do you think the government or local authorities need to take more deterrent measures in protecting our environment? Because you know environment is a pressing issue right now.</i>

Asking for advice/ suggestions/ solutions to an issue	3	+ <i>Can you give some advice for those who want to go to college, but their circumstances do not allow?</i> + <i>So, how important do you think sustainable tourism is? Can you suggest some solutions to develop sustainable tourism?</i>
Asking about assumptions	1	<i>What are the potential advantages and disadvantages of pursuing a college degree in relation to job opportunities?</i>
Suggesting for new direction	1	<i>Let's discuss another related area. What soft skills are most valued by employers, regardless of the degree?</i>
Asking about implications/ cause-effect	7	<i>How do you think advancements in technology, such as virtual reality travel experiences or online cultural exchanges, impact the ability to explore and understand different cultures without physically traveling?</i>

#### 4.3.1. Questioning

*Questioning* constituted the largest bulk among the facilitation techniques examined in the discussion threads with six or more levels deep. The categories of questioning employed included asking participants to express their viewpoints/ perspective or discuss their experiences about certain issues (45%), asking for clarification/ explanation (7%), asking about implications/ cause-effect (7%), asking for advice/ suggestions/ solutions to an issue (3%) and asking about assumption (1%).

These questioning techniques have been identified as Socratic questioning (Thomas & Junaid, 1997). Paul (1990, p. 276-277) classified Socratic Questions into different categories including (i) questions of clarification which ask for verification or additional information of one point or main idea, (ii) questions that probe assumptions which ask the student for explanation or reliability of an assumption, (iii) questions that probe reasons and evidence which ask for additional examples, reasons for making statements or process that lead the student to his or her belief, (iv) questions about viewpoints which ask the student whether there are alternatives to his viewpoint or a comparison of similarities and differences between viewpoints, and (v) questions that probe implications and consequences which helps the student to describe the implication of what is being done, or the cause-and-effect of an action.

The results of this study showed that student facilitators utilised all these categories with the predominant category of questions about viewpoints and questions of clarification. This finding is aligned with the prior studies (Elder & Paul, 1998; Hew & Cheung, 2008) which stated that these two question types helped to sustain asynchronous online discussion. Ng et al., (2012) contended that questions of viewpoint facilitated the participation and interaction as they allowed students to freely express their points of view without worrying that their answers were wrong. This is typically the case for Asian Pacific students who are very concerned about presenting their positive image in online discussion.

#### 4.3.2. Giving own opinions or experiences

*Giving own opinions or experiences* constituted the second largest bulk of the student facilitation techniques in the discussion threads with six or more levels deep. Students often employed this technique to respond to other students or merely to express their own ideas to keep the discussion going. Facilitators also frequently expressed their agreement or disagreement with other members' viewpoints. Noticeably, students often posted Socratic questions at the end of the message, after they had shared their personal viewpoints or experiences. Such a combination was also recorded in previous research (Hew & Cheung, 2008) and has been indicated to improve the likelihood of attracting more student participation in asynchronous online discussion.

### 4.3.3. Other techniques

Other facilitation techniques consisted of *Personally inviting others to contribute* (5%) and *Showing appreciation* (3%). The findings indicated that student facilitators used the former technique to encourage the quieter students or remind others to contribute to the discussion after they have expressed their opinions (Hew & Cheung, 2008). Nevertheless, Ng et al., (2012) claimed that this technique could discourage the participants whose names were not mentioned in the message from posting.

Regarding *showing appreciation* technique, the facilitators often thanked the contributors or complimented on their posts. Prior studies have pointed out that showing appreciation made the participants feel that their contribution was valued and meaningful (Wasko & Faraj, 2000) and fostered a respectful environment in the forum (Hew & Cheung, 2008). Interestingly, the student facilitators did not only show appreciation but also expressed their opinions or posting question related to this issue in question. Similar finding was also observed in Ng et al., (2009) and Ng et al., (2011). These scholars suggested that simply thanking participants was not sufficient to motivate student interaction and *showing appreciation* needed to be used in conjunction with other technique.

Another noticeable finding is the frequency of occurrence of facilitation techniques employed in the thread that achieved greater depths of more than ten levels. It is noted that the most prevalent techniques employed were questioning about viewpoints and giving opinions or experiences. This finding is consistent with Hew & Chung's study (2008). It has been suggested that the two techniques need to be greater encouraged among student facilitators to maintain better student interaction in asynchronous online discussion (Hew & Cheung, 2008).

Table 4. Facilitation techniques found in deeper threads (ten-level or more)

Thread level	Facilitation technique and frequency of occurrence
18	Giving own opinions or experiences (3) Asking questions about viewpoints/ perspectives/ experiences (4) Asking about implications/ cause-effect (2)
17	Asking questions about viewpoints/ perspectives/ experiences (4) Asking for clarification (3) Asking about implications/ cause-effect (1)
12	Giving own opinions or experiences (4)
10	Suggestion for new direction (1) Asking questions about viewpoints/ perspectives/ experiences (1) Giving own opinions or experiences (1)
10	Asking for clarification (1) Asking questions about viewpoints/ experiences (1) Giving own opinions or experiences (2)
10	Asking questions about viewpoints/ perspectives/ experiences (2) Giving own opinions or experiences (2)

## 5. Conclusions

The study aimed to examine the facilitation techniques employed among successful student facilitators. Nine techniques were discovered from the study including asking questions about viewpoints/ perspectives/ experiences, giving own opinions or experiences, asking for clarification, personally inviting others to contribute, showing appreciation, asking for advice/ suggestions/ solutions to an issue, asking about assumptions, suggesting for new direction and asking about implications/ cause-effect. The study's findings have enriched the current literature of peer facilitation especially in the Asian context. Furthermore, the outcome of the study could be of a useful resource for teachers and instructors who desire to use peer facilitation to enhance student interaction in asynchronous online discussion forum.



The study is subject to several limitations. One limitation is that due to time constraints, the researcher could not collect data from other sources such as interviews or questionnaires for the triangulation of data. Secondly, the study's findings might not be generalizable to other peer-facilitated asynchronous online discussion forums due to the nature of case study. Given these limitations, this study has clearly delineated some techniques that could be adopted to train students to facilitate asynchronous online discussion.

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# Measuring Socio-emotional Learning of College Students across Metro Manila

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the socio-emotional learning (SEL) of college students in Metro Manila, focusing on their perceptions of academic assessments, anxiety, and self-management. Using a descriptive research design, 119 students completed a survey to explore their emotional responses and coping strategies. The findings reveal moderate satisfaction with academic performance, significant stress related to oral exams and graded recitations, and challenges in self-management, particularly with time management and exam preparation. Gender differences were minimal, with male and female students showing similar trends. The study underscores the importance of targeted support to enhance SEL, reduce anxiety, and improve self-management skills, ultimately fostering academic success and personal growth.

**Keywords:** socio-emotional learning, college students, anxiety, self-management, mental health

## Introduction

After two years of distance learning, universities and colleges in the Philippines are slowly returning to face-to-face classes. However, not all schools do this in the same way. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has allowed schools to choose the teaching method that works best for them. For example, hands-on programs like medical or technical courses are more likely to return to in-person classes fully. In contrast, others may continue with online and in-person learning (Handog, 2020). CHED's guidelines, especially Memorandum Order No. 01, series of 2022, are designed to help colleges and universities safely transition back to in-person learning, particularly in areas with low COVID-19 alert levels. Returning to classrooms brings a sense of normalcy and poses challenges. Both students and educators must adjust to a mix of traditional teaching and digital tools (CHED, 2022).

The pandemic has dramatically affected children's mental health, with multiple stressors making their challenges worse, especially in the Philippines. Children face more difficulties in emotional and social development compared to adults and are more prone to issues like depression and anxiety (Malolos et al., 2021). A recent WHO report highlights the importance of social support in reducing these effects. Adolescents who received strong support from family, teachers, classmates, and peers felt less impact from the pandemic, with family support being the most important, followed by teachers, classmates, and peers (WHO, 2023). Many students may reap the advantages of online classes during the pandemic. Still, issues like stress, anxiety, and depression have become common among students, mainly due to reduced interaction with peers and teachers. The lack of social engagement has led many students to feel isolated, which in turn contributes to these mental health struggles. This isolation has made it harder for students to concentrate and has introduced additional distractions in online learning (Navarro et al., 2024). While returning to face-to-face learning represents a step towards normalcy, the pandemic's broader impact on mental health and the importance of robust social support systems cannot be overlooked. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically changed how learning is assessed, pushing educators to try new methods beyond traditional exams. With the shift to remote and hybrid learning, alternative assessments like project-based learning, online discussions, and digital portfolios became more common, allowing for a broader evaluation of student skills (García & Weiss, 2020). Digital tools, such as quizzes and self-assessments through learning management systems, also grew, providing timely feedback and encouraging self-reflection (Means & Neisler, 2020). The pandemic has profoundly altered the landscape of higher education, forcing universities worldwide to rethink their teaching and learning strategies. As institutions rapidly transitioned to online and hybrid models, students and educators faced many challenges and opportunities that continue to shape educational practices today. For students, the shift to remote learning environments brought about

significant stressors. The sudden change disrupted traditional learning rhythms, with many students struggling to adjust to new technologies, manage time effectively, and cope with the isolation from peers and instructors. This disruption often resulted in heightened anxiety and academic concerns as students navigated the complexities of learning independently without the usual support structures of campus life (Yang et al., 2022).

## Theoretical Background and Review of the Literature

This study is grounded on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as advanced by The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). SEL is a crucial part of education and personal growth. It helps people of all ages gain and use the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to build healthy identities, handle emotions, set goals, empathize with others, create and sustain supportive relationships, and make thoughtful and caring decisions. According to CASEL (2023), SEL encompasses five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

*Self-awareness* is understanding one's emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior. This includes recognizing one's strengths and areas for growth and developing a well-grounded sense of confidence. *Self-management* is regulating emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations. This involves managing stress, controlling impulses, setting and working toward personal goals, and demonstrating self-discipline and motivation. *Social awareness* is the ability to understand the perspectives of others, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. This involves showing empathy, recognizing social cues, and respecting others. On the other hand, *relationship skills* is the ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships. This includes effective communication, active listening, teamwork, conflict resolution, and seeking and offering help. *Responsible decision-making* is making caring and constructive choices about personal and social behavior. This involves considering the well-being of oneself and others, ethical standards, and the consequences of actions in various social contexts.

Many studies support that these five competencies provide a framework for fostering positive social and emotional development in educational and social settings. A study involving 805 university students examined the connections between positive future expectations, social-emotional learning (SEL) skills, perceived social support, and academic motivation. The research found that students with strong SEL skills were more likely to be internally and externally motivated, with lower motivation levels. This aligns with other findings that students who excel in SEL are more driven to achieve their goals, positively impacting their academic success (Ayhan & Ozdemir, 2024). Esen et al. (2022) further explored the impact of SEL using a mixed-methods research design and assessed the effectiveness of SEL programs among fourth-grade students. Participants were randomly assigned to different groups, and the results revealed that the SEL program significantly improved students' social-emotional skills, academic achievement, and perceptions of classroom climate, outperforming the Emotional and Social Development Program. A study gathered data from a Student Social-Emotional Perception Survey focusing on 10th-grade students. The results showed apparent differences in social-emotional competency scores based on gender, ethnicity, and economic background. Notably, students from a central Texas high school, where social-emotional learning (SEL) was part of the classroom instruction, had higher competency scores than those from a north Texas high school, where SEL was not taught. This suggests that SEL instruction in the classroom might be a critical factor in helping students develop more vital social-emotional skills, particularly when considering the diverse student populations in different areas (Torres, 2019). Likewise, Benson (2017) found that the intervention group saw significant improvements in academic performance but not social-emotional skills. A closer look at the data showed that grade level played a role in the results: younger elementary students benefited more from the Second Step program than older ones. Specifically, younger students who participated in Second Step showed notable improvements in empathy, reading, and math compared to those in the comparison group. The program positively impacted reading scores for students at a moderate learning risk when they started. Overall, girls made more progress in social-emotional skills than boys from the beginning to the end of the study. However, gender did not influence how students responded to the program as initially expected. Simion (2023), in another study, highlighted the challenges faced by students in higher education, such as anxiety, stress, and loneliness. Without strong social and emotional skills, students may struggle academically and socially. It emphasized the importance of SEL in helping students

manage these challenges, making them better prepared for personal and professional life; by examining students' feelings about tests, performance, and self-management, the research aimed to understand better how the college environment influences their motivation and success.

Research into stress among adolescents has consistently demonstrated the significant influence of academic, environmental, and familial stressors on heightened anxiety levels, particularly among boys. For instance, Joshi (2013) highlighted that boys' experiences of anxiety are closely tied to these stressors, while girls experience similar stress levels primarily due to academic pressures and the challenges of hostel life. These findings underscore the distinct socialization processes that shape the experiences of boys and girls in Indian society. Further, Rodriguez (2016) explored the broader patterns of college stress, emphasizing that certain groups—such as women, racial and ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ+ individuals—face unique stressors related to their identities. These findings point to the intersection of identity and stress, highlighting the need for a more nuanced understanding of student experiences.

In a separate study focusing on Ethiopian high school students, Hiluf and Alemu (2024) identified notable gender differences in emotional intelligence, with males scoring significantly higher across all subscales than females. These differences suggest underlying social and cultural factors influencing emotional development. Additionally, Uz et al. (2018) provided a cross-cultural perspective on achievement motivation, revealing that gender roles, rather than biological sex, are more predictive of achievement motivation across different cultures. Their research, which spanned 37 countries, showed that individualistic societies exhibit more pronounced gender differences in achievement motivation, offering insight into how cultural contexts shape gendered motivation experiences.

The shift to online learning during the pandemic offered some advantages but brought significant challenges, especially regarding students' mental health. Many students experienced increased stress, anxiety, and depression due to the reduced interaction with peers and teachers, leading to feelings of isolation. This isolation made it harder for students to concentrate and introduced additional distractions in their learning environments (Navarro et al., 2024). Although returning to face-to-face learning is a step toward normalcy, the broader impact of the pandemic on students' mental health and the need for robust social support systems remain critical.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is vital in education and personal development. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), SEL helps individuals build healthy identities, manage emotions, and establish supportive relationships because it boosts their self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2023). In higher education, the challenges of anxiety, stress, and loneliness are particularly pronounced. Without strong social and emotional skills, students may struggle academically and socially. Research underscores the importance of SEL in helping students navigate these challenges, making them better equipped for personal and professional life. By understanding students' perceptions of tests, performance, and self-management, we can gain deeper insights into how the college environment affects their motivation and success (Simion, 2023). Improving social skills, social adjustment, and emotional self-regulation can help reduce or prevent issues such as problem behavior, aggression, antisocial actions, substance abuse, anger, hostility, poor self-esteem, stress, anxiety, and depression. It can also positively impact school participation, attitudes, and performance (Diekstra & Gravesteyn, 2008). Two key factors that significantly shape the learning experience and influence students' motivation are the perceived decrease in learning quality and the increased difficulty of the assessment process (Machado et al., 2024). When students feel that they are not learning as effectively, coupled with more challenging assessments, their motivation to engage and succeed in their studies can be adversely affected. According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, students' beliefs in their abilities (self-efficacy) are crucial to their motivation. When students feel they are not learning effectively or face complex assessments, their confidence in their abilities can drop. This reduced confidence can lower their motivation to engage with their studies. Bandura's theory also suggests that if students believe their efforts will not lead to success, their motivation and engagement will decrease, demonstrating how their cognitive beliefs and external challenges affect their academic performance (Bandura, 1997, Schunk, D. H., & Pajares, F. 2002; Zimmerman et al., 2000).

This paper referenced the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model to strengthen the assumption of the variables under investigation. A previous study by Yang et al. (2022) used this model to examine how COVID-19 influences students, linking this fear to stress, involvement, and academic concerns and

ultimately affecting their psychological well-being. The current paper builds on this SOR framework by exploring how the stimulus of college life impacts students. It focuses on the struggles within the "organism"—specifically assessment, performance, anxiety, and self-management—and the resulting psychological response, measured by Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

Previous discussions highlighted the underlying value of SEL, especially in the context of mental health, and emphasized its significance in assisting students in navigating challenges, making them more equipped for personal and professional life. By exploring students' emotions regarding tests, performance, and self-management, this study sought to understand how the college environment affects their motivation and success.

## Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study aimed to understand how higher education students view their experiences with assessment, performance, feelings of anxiety, and self-management to get a clearer picture of how students see the higher education environment and how it affects their motivation to learn and succeed. This understanding was based on students' self-reports of their experiences.

## Methodology

The study used descriptive analysis with 119 college student participants from selected Metro Manila colleges. College students' self-report data, which was supplemented by an interview with six students, was used in this study. The participants were recruited via FB messenger through a network of alumni of a private sectarian school and friends in the academe. It specified that the age of the respondents must be 18 and above. Included also in the Google Form is a portion on data privacy consent. A questionnaire was used to measure socio-emotional learning with permission from Professor Anca Simion (2023). It mainly measures students' perception of their assessment, academic performance, feelings of anxiety, and self-management. The 25 items required the respondents to choose their options via an agreement of 4 levels on the Likert scale: 4 for strongly agree, 3 for agree, 2 for disagree, and 1 for strongly disagree. Additional information on school type and gender was also collected, and it determined whether school type and gender would bear in the students' responses. Descriptive data analyses were used to organize the information gathered. At the very best, the data gathered was used to the maximum benefit of this study. The quantitative data was reinforced with qualitative data gathered from six students across five universities.

## Results

Table 1 shows the distribution of responses among college student respondents according to gender. The table shows more male college students (n=71) than females (n=48) in the present study.

Cross-tabulation through gender was used to determine the responses using the scale. Considering the non-randomized data, an attempt to use chi-square failed, considering violations of expected frequencies in some cells.

**Table 1**

Distribution of Socio-Emotional Learning Responses when Grouped According to Their Gender

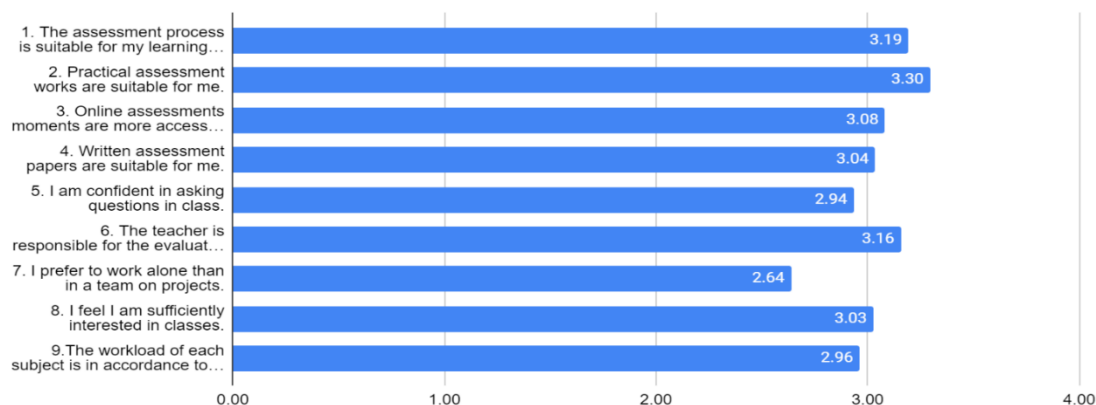
Gender	Socio-emotional Learning			Total
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	
Female	14	33	1	48
Male	18	50	3	71
Total	32	83	4	119

Nevertheless, the table further shows that both groups of respondents had similar response trends centered more on the 'Agree,' showing that gender was not a differentiating factor in the students' responses on SEL. This is different from the findings of Hiluf and Alemu (2024), claiming a significant difference between males' and females' emotional intelligence.

Figure 1 provides a detailed overview of students' perceptions regarding various aspects of their assessment experience, with specific mean values indicating the level of agreement.

**Figure 1.**

#### Mean Scores of Students' Perception of Their Assessments

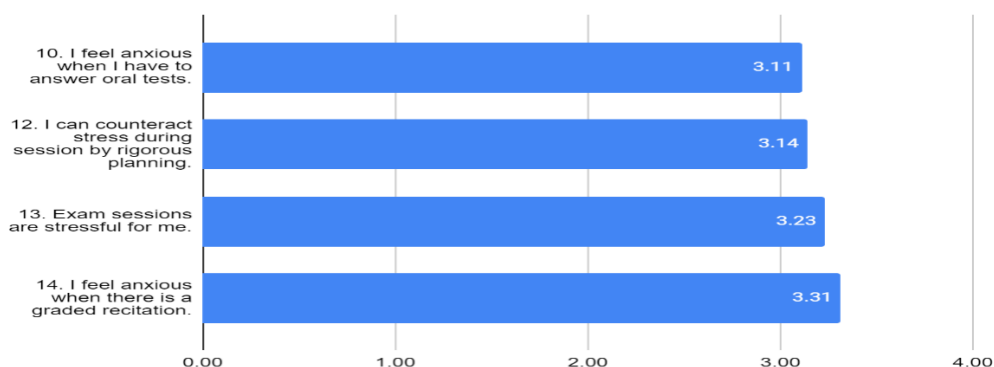


The assessment process is generally regarded as appropriate for the students' learning pace, with an average score of 3.19. Practical assessments are the most well-received, earning the highest average score of 3.30, which suggests strong student agreement on their suitability. Online assessments are viewed as more accessible compared to in-class assessments, as reflected by a mean score of 3.08, though responses show some variation. Written assessments, with a slightly lower mean score of 3.04, are perceived as somewhat less favorable than practical and online assessments. Confidence in asking questions in class is a concern, with a lower average score of 2.94, suggesting some students feel uncomfortable participating in discussions. Students largely agree that teachers are responsible for evaluation methods, reflected in a mean score of 3.16. Preference for working alone on projects is low, with a score of 2.64, indicating that few students prefer collaborative work. Interest in classes is moderate, with a score of 3.03, showing that while students are generally engaged, there's room to boost class interest. A study by Navarro et al. (2024) suggests that lack of social engagement has contributed to feelings of isolation and mental health challenges, affecting concentration during online learning. The perceived workload appropriateness scored 2.96, showing mixed reviews, with some students finding it either too demanding or not challenging enough. Overall, the data shows a positive view of assessments but highlights areas for improvement, such as classroom participation and workload balance.

Figure 2 shows that students experience moderate to high levels of anxiety around academic assessments. Anxiety about oral tests has an average score of 3.11, with responses ranging widely, indicating that some students are very anxious while others are less affected. This suggests varying comfort levels with oral presentations. Stress management through careful planning scores 3.14, showing it is somewhat effective, with little variation in responses. The highest anxiety is reported during graded recitations, with an average score of 3.31, making them particularly stressful due to performance pressure. Overall, exams and recitations are significant sources of stress, highlighting the need for targeted support to help students manage anxiety. This aligns with Yang et al. (2022), who found that the shift to online and hybrid learning environments created additional stress for students and educators.

**Figure 2.**

Mean Scores of Students' Perception of Their Anxiety

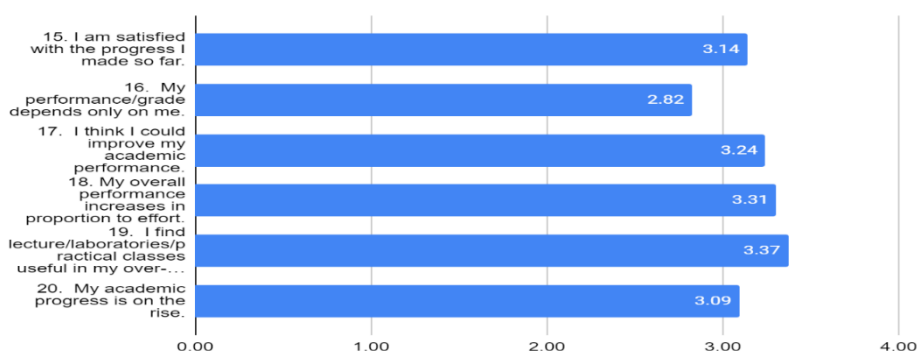


Examining students' perceptions of their academic performance reveals a varied landscape of attitudes and self-assessments. Overall, students express a moderate level of satisfaction with their progress, with an average score of 3.14.

Meanwhile, Figure 3 shows the mean scores of students' perceptions of their academic performance. The findings reveal that students generally experience a sense of accomplishment in their academic journey, though mixed feelings about their paths balance this.

**Figure 3.**

Mean Scores of Students' Perception of Their Academic Performance



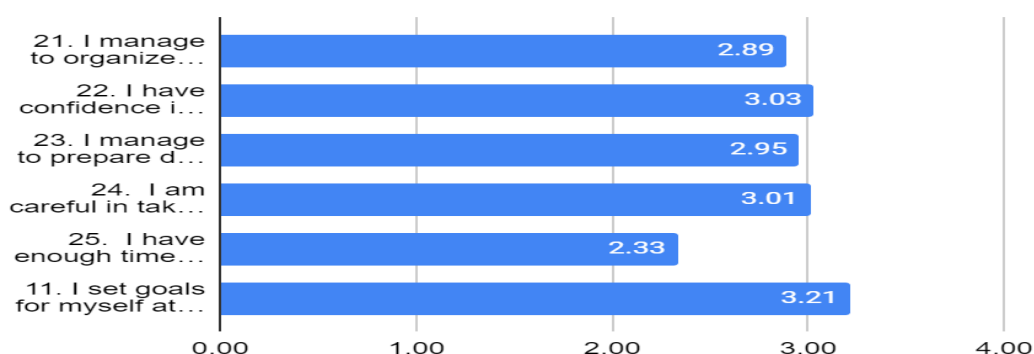
An average score of 2.82 suggests that students believe their academic outcomes are influenced not only by their effort but also by external factors. However, a higher score of 3.24 on the belief in the potential for improvement reflects an optimistic view that increased effort can lead to better performance. This positive outlook is further supported by a score of 3.31, indicating that students perceive a strong link between their efforts and academic results. When students struggle with learning or face complex assessments, their confidence may drop, reducing their motivation to engage with their studies. Bandura's theory also explains that if students doubt their efforts, their motivation and engagement will likely decrease, showing how personal beliefs and external challenges influence academic performance.

When exploring students' perceptions of their self-management abilities, Figure 4 shows that several themes illuminate their approaches to organizing, preparing, and managing their academic responsibilities.



**Figure 4.**

**Mean Scores of Students' Perception of Their Self-Management**



Students report moderate success in self-management, with an average score of 2.89, suggesting that while some manage their time and tasks well, there is room for improvement in organizational skills. Confidence in their work is slightly higher at 3.03, indicating that most students feel reasonably assured about the quality of their efforts, though confidence varies. Preparation for major exams, like the final trimester exam, has a mean score of 2.95, reflecting mixed abilities and inconsistent preparation. Students rate their note-taking at 3.01, showing decent attentiveness but also room for improvement in their note-taking practices. The perception of having adequate time for practice, with a mean score of 2.33, indicates a concern among students about time management and its impact on their ability to practice effectively. This lower score may point to a broader issue of balancing academic workload with sufficient practice time. Lastly, setting goals at the beginning of the academic year, which received a mean score of 3.21, reflects a positive tendency among students to engage in goal setting as a strategy for managing their academic progress. These findings indicate that while students show strengths in self-management, particularly in areas like goal-setting and confidence in their work, they struggle with organization, preparation, and time management. These challenges suggest a need for targeted support and interventions. As a counselor-researcher, exploring strategies to strengthen students' self-management skills is essential, focusing on areas where they feel less confident. It is also crucial to recognize that emotional and social intelligence encompasses a range of non-cognitive skills that play a crucial role in how students handle environmental demands and pressures (Mong-Lin, 2023).

An interview with six students across five universities was made to enrich the quantitative findings. The open-ended question floated: If you were to learn the five core skills of SEL, how can your university help you learn or enhance these skills? The answers were organized into three themes, and these are presented below:

**1. Implement seminars and workshops specifically focused on SEL**

- *"Through electives or seminars, cause for me as a BS Psychologist... I have classes where they teach me those 5 [skills] and reflect, such as my theoretical psychology and positive psychology. I think the university should implement these in all courses."* (Student emphasizes integrating SEL-focused seminars into all university programs.)
- *"Maybe there should be a professional gathering (seminar with huddle segments/group discussions)."* (Student suggests structured seminars with interactive elements like group discussions to enhance SEL.)

**2. Create more team-building and professional networking opportunities**

- *"The intrams is actually a good example of it because you put students from different classes together."* (The student highlights how university-wide events like intramurals encourage team-building and peer connection.)

- *"There should be a school-authorized student-run committee that comes up with activities."* (Student advocates for student-led activities, which could enhance social interaction and relationship-building.)
- *"I think we can teach those skills by focusing on outputs that require working with other people."* (Collaborative activities, potentially aligned with professional networking and team-building, are seen as vital for learning SEL skills.)

### 3. Encourage reflective practices through dedicated class time or extracurricular activities

- *"It all comes from experience, learning, and understanding. For me, college life (kasi) is different from high school; it makes us interact more with people, strengthens relationships, and allows for self-management, self-awareness, and improvement."* (Reflection on university experiences as a driver for SEL development.)
- *"For me, without your own effort the 5 [skills] would never work... it is about building yourself and improving yourself."* (Self-driven reflection is considered necessary for SEL development, highlighting personal effort in extracurricular activities.)
- *"Counseling and lengthy required class? With incentives."* (This student suggests structured class time, possibly incentivized, to foster reflective practices.)

Although only six college students were interviewed, their responses underscored the importance of SEL (Social and Emotional Learning). They suggested integrating SEL into academic curricula, seminars, workshops, or professional gatherings, including group discussions. Additionally, their emphasis on team-building and networking activities suggests that student-led initiatives and collaborative projects could enhance social interaction and skill development. The students also highlighted the value of reflective practices in class and extracurricular activities, emphasizing that self-awareness and personal growth are fostered through structured reflection and intentional effort.

## Conclusions and Implications

The findings show that students generally feel the assessment process matches their learning pace, with practical assessments being the most favored. They find online assessments more accessible than written ones but see room for improvement in class participation, confidence, and responsibility for evaluations. Students prefer collaboration over individual work and have moderate interest in classes, though this could be improved. Anxiety levels are moderate to high, especially around oral tests and graded recitations, signaling a need for better stress management and support. While some students find planning helps reduce stress, exams and recitations remain significant stressors.

Students are moderately satisfied with their progress and believe they can improve with effort. They value lectures and practical classes but are somewhat unsure about their academic progress, suggesting a generally positive outlook with a need for more evident support. Their organization and preparation skills are rated as moderate, with some challenges in time management and consistency. While they feel confident in goal setting and their work, note-taking and practice time need improvement. Applying Social Cognitive Theory, these results suggest that targeted strategies and support could boost students' self-management and confidence.

The suggestions of the six interviewed students are relevant, such as seminars and workshops focused on SEL, integrated into courses, or through professional gatherings with group discussions that can target topics like goal-setting, confidence in their work, they struggle with organization, preparation, and time management.

Emphasizing on the value of team-building and networking opportunities, these student-led activities and collaborative projects could enhance social interaction and skill-building; this is congruent to the participants' preference to work in collaboration with others. The feeling of being alone during the pandemic has certainly made them hungry for more social interactions.

Highlighting the importance of reflective practices through class time or extracurricular activities, and stressing that self-awareness and growth comes from structured reflection and personal effort. While the

study might have invited student respondents to think and reflect about their university experience vis a vis their SEL skills, it is certainly timely for them to reflect and decide to be responsible for their own growth within and beyond the university life.

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# S.U.S.T.A.I.N.A.B.L.E. Learning Outcomes: A Nudge for Sustainable Education Quality Assurance

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## ABSTRACT

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all people. SDG4 is supported by the 10 targets, of which Target 7 is about education for sustainable development and global citizenship, ensuring that by the year 2030 all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. In light of Target 7, this paper reviews the key features of the Outcome-based education (OBE) approach, which is believed to enable life-long learning and sustainable education. This OBE approach has been officially applied to higher education in Vietnam since 2016. This paper also reviews the established and known principles for development of expected learning outcomes (ELOs) in higher education, namely the S.M.A.R.T. and the W.I.S.E.R., which are recommended by ASEAN University Quality Assurance Network, and the V.A.S.C.U.L.A.R. Considering every facet in the connection between higher education institutions and industries, the present paper introduces the concept of Orange Box. This concept, along with the analysis of the established ELO development principles, lays the groundwork for the proposal of an alternative ELO principle, termed by the authors of this paper as S.U.S.T.A.I.N.A.B.L.E. This alternative principle can arguably go further beyond the existing principles with respect to satisfying the requirements of the contemporary world of employment and the ever increasing demands of stakeholders in higher education.

**Keywords:** *Learning outcomes, SUSTAINABLE, quality assurance, quality education*

## 1. Introduction

The United Nations define sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals by the United Nations (2015), Sustainable Development Goal 4 is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all people. This Goal 4 is supported by 10 targets, of which Target 7 is about education for sustainable development and global citizenship. Target 7 is to ensure that by the year 2030 all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

In light of Target 7, the current paper reviews the key features of the Outcome-based education (OBE), which is believed to enable life-long learning and sustainable education.

OBE is defined by, focused on, organized around, operated around, and aligned with the intended learning outcomes, which, according to Kennedy et al (2006), are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning.

In Vietnam, OBE has been supported by the Vietnamese national Qualifications Framework approved by the Vietnamese Government (2016), which stipulates learning outcomes to include factual theory and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills, profession practical skills and communicative and interpersonal skills, and level of autonomy and personal responsibility in the application of knowledge and skills in the implementation of professional tasks.

To realize the national Qualifications Framework, Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (2021) has modified that learning outcomes are the requirements for quality and competencies by the learners after completing a training programme, including the minimal requirements for knowledge, skills, level of autonomy and personal responsibility by the learners upon graduation. The realization of the OBE into practices, however, has face numerous challenges.

In hope of providing further information and good practices of ELOs, the current paper reviews the established and known principles for development of expected learning outcomes (ELOs) in higher education, namely the S.M.A.R.T., which has been credited to the late Drucker in the 1950s, the W.I.S.E.R., which has been recommended by ASEAN University Quality Assurance Network assessors in addition to the S.M.A.R.T., and the V.A.S.C.U.L.A.R., which was proposed by Professor Sally Brown, a United Kingdom educational expert, in 2019.

The current paper also briefly discusses the practice of Black Box method, which was introduced by Crawley et al (Granholt et al, 2021), in the curriculum development and proposes the concept of Orange Box in the program development taking into consideration every facet in the connection between higher education institutions and industries. This Orange Box, along with the analysis of the established ELO development principles, lays the groundwork for the proposal of an alternative ELO development principle, termed in this paper as S.U.S.T.A.I.N.A.B.L.E.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 The Outcome based Education

The Outcome-Based Education (OBE) approach (Dao, 2022) can be traced back to the work of the behavioral objectives movement of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. One of the advocates of this type of teaching was Robert Mager, who proposed the idea of writing very specific statements about observable outcomes. He called these statements instructional objectives. Using these instructional objectives and performance outcomes, Robert Mager attempted to define the type of learning that would occur at the conclusion of instruction and how that learning would be assessed.

According to Morcke et al (2013), even before Robert Mager, Tyler emphasized educational objectives as early as 1949. Tyler argued that curriculum design should be determined by explicit objectives expressed in terms of changes the learning was supposed to produce in the behavior of students. Tyler was then followed by his doctoral student Bloom, who developed and introduced a taxonomy of educational goals in the cognitive domain in 1956, in which Bloom classified the educational goals into knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and stressed that they should be communicable.

The wave of advocacy of OBE continued with Bloom's endorsement of mastery learning in 1968 and Gagne's work on instructional design in 1974 (Morcke et al, 2013). A revival of OBE emerged with Spady's publications.

According to Spady (1991, 2020), OBE should mean basing education on intended outcomes that are deemed fundamental to learner success and lifelong empowerment. This powerful OBE concept, model, philosophy, or paradigm rested on the firm, consistent use of the word 'based', a definitive construct that meant: defined by, focused on, organized around, operated around, and aligned with.

Spady and Marshall (2021) compare and contrast conventional education (Non-OBE education) and OBE as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Non-OBE versus OBE

Model	Non-OBE	OBE
principles	- Input and content-focused - Teacher-centred	+ Output-focused + Learner-centred
management strategy	- Attendance requirement - Calendar and content-defined programmes	+ Learning outcomes-defined programmes
theoretical basis	- Teachers as experts - Focus on teacher design - Norm referencing	+ Behavioral approach + Measurable learning outcomes + Criterion referencing
curriculum content	- Segmented, may be handled in parts	+ Integrated, linking with learning objectives

Model	Non-OBE	OBE
process of education	- Highlight content and teaching resources	+ Highlight learning standards and learner performance
organizational mode	- Curriculum planning: teaching and assessment can be handled by separate unit	+ Handling curriculum planning, teaching and assessment in a coherent manner and aware of the focus of alignment
curriculum requirement	- Emphasizing contact time and student workload	+ Emphasizing student performance or clearly defined outcome indicators

Source: Spady, G. W., & Marshall, J. K. (1991). Beyond Traditional Outcomes-Based Education. *Educational Leadership*, 49, pp 67-72.

Morcke et al (2013) evaluate that Spady's ideas were not based on any new theoretical insights and adhered closely to the behaviorist principles of the earlier competency movement. It was in some respects more restrictive, particularly regarding affects (i.e. attitudes, emotions, and values). Spady, in fact, acknowledged the importance of affects but regarded them as preconditions for outcomes rather than outcomes in themselves. Spady called affects 'goals', which he distinguished from 'outcomes' because they were not directly observable and could not, therefore, be included in the specification of an outcome-based curriculum.

Killen (2000) views OBE in three different ways: (1) a theory of education, (2) a systemic structure for education, and (3) classroom practice. He repeats Spady's words back to 1994 that OBE means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. OBE means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens. As we can see, Killen (2020) share Spady's view of the four essential principles of OBE, namely *clarity of focus*, *designing back*, *high expectations*, and *expanded opportunities*.

Sessums (2020) sees OBE as an organizational structure, and as a learning model, which is non-prescriptive. OBE, instead, offers a handful of principles that are worth considering in more detail. These principles are *Student-centered*, given that OBE seeks answers to the questions: what does a learner need to do to demonstrate mastery of a particular skill, knowledge, or behavior?, *Clarity*, given that all learning objectives in an OBE model are clearly spelled out ahead of time, and therefore learners know what is expected of them, and learners can adjust their focus and questions more appropriately, and *Flexibility*, for an OBE model must be flexible enough to adjust to a learner's strengths and weaknesses, and OBE provides learners enough time to attain fluency or proficiency.

The OBE system can be understood through the illustrated "5 P's" OBE Pyramid (Figure 1) by Junaid Qadir, a professor of Computer Engineering at Qatar University, and colleagues based on William Spady's OBE book.

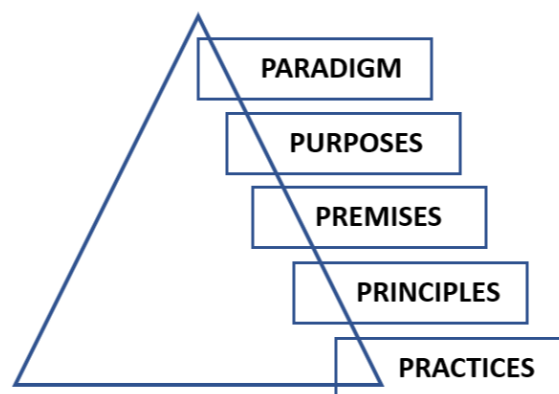


Figure 1: The OBE Pyramid (the 5 P's)

The steps in the OBE Pyramid and their compositions are described as below:

- Paradigm: *what* and *whether* students learn successfully is more important than *when* and *how* they learn something
- Purposes: (1) equip students with knowledge, competence, and qualities to be successful after they exit the education system; (2) structure and operate schools so that the desired outcomes are achieved/maximized for all students
- Premises: (1) all students can learn, but not in the same time / same way; (2) successful learning breeds more successful learning; (3) schools control the conditions that direct learning
- Principles: (1) clarity of focus on exit outcomes of significance; (2) expanded opportunity/support for learning success; (3) high expectations for all to succeed; (4) design down from culminating outcomes
- Practices: (1) define outcomes; (2) design curriculum; (3) deliver instruction; (4) document results; (5) determine advancement

Qadir et al (2020)

Among criticisms to OBE, Stenhouse was a very influential critic (Morcke et al, 2013). Stenhouse rejected the view that the only way to organize a curriculum was to pre-specify outcomes in terms of measurable changes in student behavior. Whilst learning objectives concerning factual knowledge and simple skills made good sense, Stenhouse argued that educational processes, which influenced the development of values, insight, and judgement, could not be subsumed into a curriculum model that focused strictly on behavioral objectives. In reality, when students learned affectively, socially, culturally, aesthetically, or ethically from experience, it was not possible to specify goals or assess them objectively but that did not mean such types of learning were unimportant. By placing more emphasis on optimizing students' learning than on measuring outputs or outcomes, Stenhouse was emphasizing education (meaning *drawing learning out from students*) as opposed to training (meaning *putting intended learning outcomes into students*).

According to Sessums (2020), there are challenges when applying OBE model. First of all, it costs time and energy because institutions and staff have to work collaboratively to produce meaningful content, construct reliable metrics for success, and support students with regular and substantive feedback and interactivity. Secondly, it requires unbundling instructional roles. A subject-matter expert is clearly needed to provide appropriate content for lessons. However, this expert might not be the best judge of mastery. If this is the case, an institution might consider hiring faculty or specialists to manage the assessment components of lessons. This move to a possibly more objective form of evaluation and assessment could be considered controversial. Last but not least, OBE might bring about disruption because such a shift in how instruction, assessment, and support is organized can be disruptive. If the change is well-managed, however, it can yield remarkable results for learners and institutions.

To sum up, it has been agreed that OBE is an educational process which begins with an end of mind. Although OBE is a “controversial model of educational restructuring” which brings about some challenges (Sessums, 2020), it has been increasingly adopted within credit frameworks and by national quality and qualifications authorities such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the UK, the Australian, New Zealand and South African Qualification Authorities, to name a few (Dao, 2022).

## 2.2 The Constructive Alignment

Constructive Alignment curriculum framework introduced by Biggs and Tang is heart of the OBE (Dao, 2022).

According to Laws et al (2019), Biggs and Tang tell us that the term ‘constructive alignment’ was developed from an experiment involving the use of portfolios as a means of assessing students’ achievement. They explain that ‘*Constructive*’ comes from the constructivist theory that learners use their own activity to construct their knowledge as interpreted through their existing schemata. ‘*Alignment*’ is a principle in curriculum theory that assessment tasks should be aligned to what it is intended to be learned ...’.

This framework emphasizes teaching/learning processes as well as assessment and aligns them both with learning outcomes in a process comprising of 4 steps (Biggs, 2014):



1. Defining the intended learning outcomes;
2. Choosing teaching/learning activities likely to lead to the intended learning outcomes;
3. Assessing students' actual learning outcomes, to see how well they match what was intended;
4. Arriving at a final grade.

The Constructive Alignment (CA) framework has two major aspects, namely the *constructive* aspect and the *alignment* aspect. The ideas that students construct knowledge through meaningful learning activities is the focus of the *constructive* aspect, and the *alignment* aspect centers on what the teacher does. The learner needs to construct the understandings for themselves. Knowledge is not something that is transmitted to them by the teacher: learners need to create their own understandings; their own knowledge. Teaching is simply a catalyst for learning. The teacher must create the learning environment. This environment must support students' learning through devised learning activities.

The use of this aligned process ensures that there is consistency between intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessment tasks. And this aligned process is believed to have a positive effect on students' academic achievement. In other words, the correlation between teaching and learning, intended learning outcomes and assessment helps make the overall learning experience more transparent and meaningful for students. Aligning the assessment with the intended learning outcomes also means that students know how their achievement will be assessed and measured (Martin, 2012; Dao, 2022). Although Biggs was unaware of it at the time of his 1996 article, his approach was similar to the influential approach to curriculum and instruction developed many decades earlier by Ralph Tyler (Laws et al, 2019). In addition, at the time of Tyler's writing the norm-referenced evaluation of students learning was dominant. A CA approach accepts norm-referenced evaluation as a reality, but advocates for a criterion-referenced approach to student assessment.

The verbs that Biggs (2014) mentioned help to map levels of understanding that can be built into the intended learning outcomes and to create the assessment criteria or rubrics. These verbs are known as learning taxonomies or educational taxonomies. A summary of these educational and learning taxonomies are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Common educational and learning taxonomy Verbs**

Learning Taxonomies				Other Taxonomies
<i>Cognitive Domain</i>		<i>Affective Domain</i>	<i>Psycho-motor Domain</i>	<i>SOLO* Taxonomy</i> by John Biggs & Collis (1982); <i>Taxonomy of significant learning</i> by Fink L. Dee (2003); <i>Educational taxonomies</i> by Simon Paul Atkinson (2012)
(Bloom, 1956)	(Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)	(Krathwohl <i>et al.</i> , 1999)	(Dave, 1967)	
Knowledge	Remember	Receiving	Imitation	
Comprehension	Understand		Manipulation	
Application	Apply	Responding	Precision	
Analysis	Analyze	Valuing	Articulation	
Synthesis	Evaluate	Organizing and conceptualizing	Naturalization	
Evaluation	Create	Characterizing by values		

\*SOLO: Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes

Source: Dao, L. P. (2022). Constructive Alignment in an Undergraduate Academic Programme: EFL Teachers' Cognition and Practices. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Can Tho University.

An example of Biggs' CA at the module level is given in Figure 2.

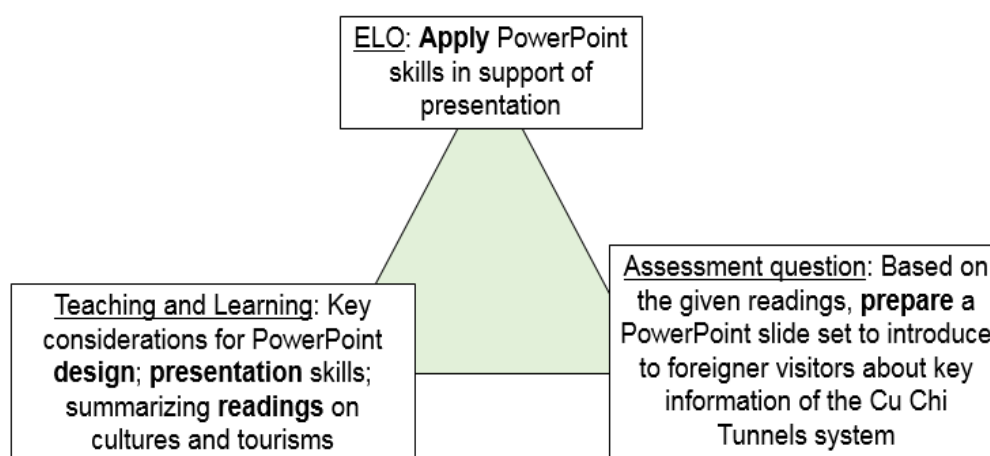


Figure 2: A CA of course ELO, teaching and learning and assessment

### 2.3 The Black box method and the Orange box method

According to Granholm et al (2021), a curriculum can by time develop to a collection of good courses created, executed, and further developed by individual teachers alone. This can lead to curricula where the connection between the courses cannot clearly be seen and the required inputs and outputs between the courses remain unclear. Courses with same content can be arranged twice or lead to a curriculum where crucial content is missing.

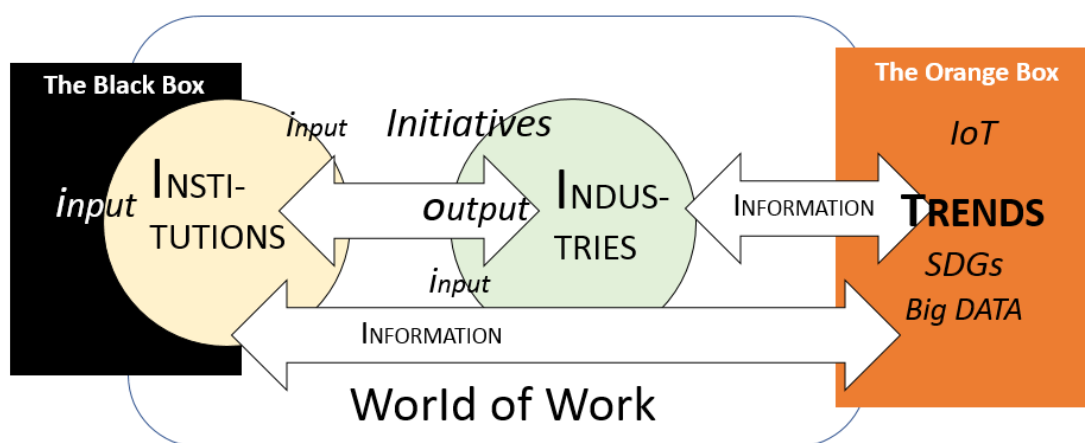
The Black box method by Crawley et al (2007, cited in Granholm et al, 2021) can help enhance the quality of curriculum development and review. This black box method is used to visualize the links between courses modules in a curriculum. In this method all courses are represented by a black box. Only the input knowledge required for the course, and the output learning outcomes, are made visible. All faculty members are asked to produce a black box element of the course that are responsible for. These elements are then linked together via their input requirements and outcomes. Applying the Black box method, the faculty members involved in course implementation can identify the specific knowledge the students should enter the course with and what knowledge and skills the students should bring with them to future courses. These knowledge and skills are expressed as expected learning outcomes.

Thanks to the Black box method, there are opportunities to fulfil the need for increased collaboration between faculty teams as well as within the faculty teams. The process is believed to enhance dialogue and productive discussions among faculty members and increase awareness of the whole curriculum among the faculty members as well.

The curriculum can also benefit from an advisory board which may consist of stakeholders from regional and national companies. A review of such an advisory board is conducted on a yearly basis, for example, and participants share their opinions on what they think will become important, what content should be removed from, added to, or adjusted in the curriculum to make sure program graduates possess proper competencies to meet their future employers (Granholm et al, 2021).

*Black box*, however, has negative denotational meaning since it reckons listeners and readers of airplane crashes or accidents.

The current paper would like to recommend an Orange box method (Figure 3). This idea derives from the publications by Granholm et al (2021), which emphasizes the role of the industries, AgnewAgnew (2021), which reminds the changes made to the curriculum by academic programs to meet the employer's current needs, the ASEAN University Network criteria (ASEAN University Network, 2020), which requires the dialogue and collaboration in support of the curricula review between the program and the industrial representatives, or stakeholders, and the practices of industrial advisory board (IAB) in the university where the researchers have been working.



**Figure 3: An Orange box method in program development by this paper**

As seen in Figure 3, the Orange box method helps provide input to academic programs. This is true to the popular motto in forum discussing higher education and industry links, namely ‘A program should provide industries with what industries will need, not what the program is possessing’.

### 3. The Research Method and Materials

This paper applies a review method based on content analysis and themes before drawing on the new principle for development of ELOs. The reliability is maintained to a high extent thanks to the experiences of the researchers who are higher education lecturers and quality assessors.

The paper reviews the three well-known ELO development principles, as discussed below.

#### 3.1 The SMART principle

*SMART* is the acronym for *Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound* (ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance, 2022).

This principle is usually credited to Peter Drucker, and it is recommended by quality assessors of ASEAN University Network.

The components in this principle represent the thumb rules to development of ELOs in academic programs in higher education. In particular,

- *Specific*: ELO statements are concise and well-defined
- *Measurable*: ELOs are measurable or observable
- *Attainable*: ELOs are realistic for students to achieve them
- *Relevant*: ELOs meet the needs of the stakeholders
- *Time-bound*: ELOs are formulated in consideration of the required time for students to achieve the learning outcomes

#### 3.2 The WISER principle

*WISER* is the acronym for *Work of the future, Integrated constructive alignment, SMART, Ecosystem perspective, and Real-world experience* (ASEAN University Network Quality Assurance, 2022).

This principle is recommended by Mr. Johnson Ong Chee Bin, the Founder of Living Better and Education Quality International, Singapore, and has been a key expert for ASEAN University Network quality trainings.

The new WISER principle has been introduced to supplement the longer established SMART principle taking into consideration the new context of higher education in ASEAN communities.

The new thumb rules to development of ELOs are below:

- *Work of the future*: ELOs should be formulated based on future ready skills
- *Integrated constructive alignment*: ELOs are constructively aligned vertically and horizontally
- *SMART*: ELOs are formulated with *SMART* principle
- *Ecosystem perspective*: ELOs are formulated in consideration of the ecosystem

- *Real-world experience*: ELOs are related to the real-world experience

As explained, *WISER* cover *SMART* and focuses on the bigger context of higher education (the perspective of an ecosystem) and the connection between what the learners have achieved and what the learners are expected to perform in real life (real-world experience).

### 3.3 The VASCULAR principle

*VASCULAR* is the acronym for *Verifiable, Action-orientated, Singular, Constructively aligned, Understandable, Level-appropriate, Affective-inclusive, and Regularly reviewed*.

Vascular means the vessels that carry blood to parts in the human body. With this new principle, Brown (2019) tried to put the life-blood back into learning.

The new principle for development of ELOs are:

- *Verifiable*: the program can tell when ELOs have been achieved, and if students can achieve these ELOs
- *Action-orientated*: ELOs lead to real and useful activities
- *Singular*: ELOs are not portmanteau, and they are readily matchable to student work produced
- *Constructively aligned*: There is clear alignment between ELOs, teaching and learning, and learning assessment and evaluation
- *Understandable*: The language for the ELOs is meaningful to all stakeholders
- *Level-appropriate*: ELOs are suitable and differentiable between degree levels (e.g. Bachelor's degree, Master's degree,...) and phases of study (e.g. year 1, year 2,...)
- *Affective-inclusive*: ELOs should cover capabilities in the affective domain of learning
- *Regularly reviewed*: ELOs should not be stuck in history, frozen at a particular point in time, yet ELOs should always be fit-for-purpose

This *VASCULAR* principle is also discussed by Phil Race (2020). This *VASCULAR* principle, however, has not been popular to the community of quality practitioners in Vietnam.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 The recommended SUSTAINABLE principle

This paper recommends the *SUSTAINABLE* principle.

*SUSTAINABLE* is the acronym for *Subject-specific, Understandable, Stakeholders engaged, Transferrable/Transversal, Achieved, Interdisciplinary, National qualifications framework referenced, Aligned, Broadly defined, Learner-centric, and Ethical thinking*.

The components of the new principle for development of ELOs are explained as following:

Taking into consideration the content of the ELOs

- *Subject-specific (S)*: ELOs should reflect the specific requirements of the area of education and the disciplines in which the program is located
- *Interdisciplinary (I)*: ELOs help learners develop more advanced epistemological beliefs, enhanced critical thinking ability and metacognitive skills, and an understanding of the relations among perspectives derived from different academic disciplines
- *Broadly defined (B)*: Since outcomes take different forms – from small skills to complex configurations of life-performance competences and roles (Spady, 2022), ELOs should be broadly stated so as to avoid a too rigid or fixed definition of learning outcomes. Parts of ELOs should be achieved thanks to relevant extracurricular and co-curricular activities
- *Transversal (Transferrable) (T)*: ELOs consist of skills and competences that can be effectively applied to a wide variety of situations in life and in work

Taking into consideration the deployment of the ELOs in the curriculum

- *Aligned (A)*: ELOs are aligned constructively to teaching and assessment, aligned constructively both vertically (e.g. to the programme educational goals) and horizontally (i.e. contribution across the courses in the curriculum to the program-level ELOs)

Taking into consideration the benchmarks for level descriptors

- *National qualifications framework referenced (N)*: ELOs meet the required learning outcomes of knowledge, skills, level of autonomy and responsibility, and necessary competences as prescribed for the corresponding qualification level according to the national qualifications framework, for example the Vietnamese Qualifications Framework

Taking into consideration the role of learners in higher education

- Learner-centric (L): ELOs should put the learner at the centre of the learning process, as an active constructor of knowledge. Learner-centric also means learner equality, i.e. all students can learn and succeed.

Taking into consideration the role of programme stakeholders in the design and development of ELOs

- Stakeholders engaged: ELOs are formulated using and reflecting inputs from and highly representative requirements of from key stakeholders (i.e. the industries, policy-makers, learners, and academic staff) of the program

Taking into consideration the achieved ELOs among the learners

- Achieved (A): ELOs are real and useful activities that can be demonstrated by the learners and then graduates of the program. Learners should do something that is visible and tangible, or in other words, an action or performance that required competence

Taking into consideration the contribution of higher education to good values and sustainable development in the wider society

- Ethical thinking (E): ELOs should educate and train learners to identify and describe ethical issues in different contexts, articulate the ethical considerations involved in different responses to those issues, and provide a rationale for a position that addresses those considerations, including sustainable development in any related aspects

Taking into consideration the language of the ELOs

- Understandable (U): ELOs are formulated using the language that helps convey adequately the unique features of the program and is meaningful to all program stakeholders

#### 4.2 The SUSTAINABLE principle compared the SMART and the WISER principles

A comparison of the SUSTAINABLE principle against the SMART and the WISER principles is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: A Matching of the SUSTAINABLE and the SMART and the WISER principles**

	S	M	A	R	T	W	I	S	E	R
S	√							√		
U	√							√		
S				√		√		√	√	√
T										√
A		√	√		√		√	√		
I						√			√	
N					√				√	
A	√	√		√			√	√	√	√
B									√	
L					√					
E										

#### 4.3 The SUSTAINABLE principle compared with the VASCULAR principle

A comparison of the SUSTAINABLE principle against the VASCULAR principle is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: A Matching of the SUSTAINABLE and the VASCULAR principles**

	V	A	S	C	U	L	A	R
S					√			
U					√			
S								√
T		√						
A		√	√					

I							√	
N						√	√	
A				√				
B			√					
L		√						
E							√	√

## 5. Conclusion

According to Spady (2022), getting wiser about learning ‘Outcomes’ makes us much wiser about both what they are and the vast range of options educators have in developing them.

Apart from the contents and intents that we put in the ELOs, we educators do need some kind of framework or principles to follow when formulating and developing ELOs for our curricula and programs.

Education for sustainable development needs sustainable ELOs that should be developed from a SUSTAINABLE principle, taking into consideration the content of the ELOs, the way ELOs are deployed in the curriculum, level descriptors that ELOs are benchmarked against, the role of learners and programme stakeholders in the design and development of ELOs, the focus on the achieved ELOs among the learners, the contribution of higher education to good values and sustainable development in the wider society, and the communication effect of the defined ELOs.

The SUSTAINABLE principle for ELOs recommended in this paper results from the reality of higher education in the country of the writers where requirements for basic and comprehensive innovation of education and higher education has been a must, and challenges have been recognized when assuring the right path of outcome-based education with ELOs as the central part.

This principle has been formulated by reviewing the current established principles and thanks to the experiences of the researchers who are higher education lecturers and quality assessors. The principle of ELO development in this paper therefore can arguably go further beyond the existing principles with respect to satisfying the requirements of the contemporary world of employment and the ever increasing demands of stakeholders in higher education.

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# Faculty Performance Evaluation: Looking Through Its Lens for Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Teaching-Learning Management

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## ABSTRACT

The faculty performance evaluation is a platform for feedback from students that facilitates the instructor's continuous improvement of their teaching-learning management. Using the descriptive research design, this study analyzed the results of the faculty performance evaluation by more than 2,000 students at a college in a Philippine state university for three academic years, 2021-2022 to 2023-2024. Data were generated from the students' ratings of the performance of 44 permanent faculty members utilizing the instrument prescribed in the Philippine National Budget Circular 461. This instrument, accessed by students in the university's official learning management system, measured performance in four areas: commitment, knowledge of subject matter, teaching for independent learning, and management of learning. The summary of performance evaluation results showed that the faculty obtained the highest rating of Outstanding in knowledge of subject matter for a couple of semesters, and consistently obtained Very Satisfactory in the areas of commitment, teaching for independent learning, and management of learning.. Further analysis of the ratings in each sub-dimension pointed out the need for faculty to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their teaching-learning management to be rated as excellent. For instance, teachers may need more competence in guiding students to learn beyond what is required, which could include the integration of technology such as Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies. These are digital innovations in education that teachers have to embrace as teaching-learning tools in the post-pandemic digital era.

**Keywords:** faculty performance evaluation, commitment, knowledge of subject matter, teaching for independent learning, management of learning

## Introduction

The quality of education is influenced by several factors, one of which is the effectiveness of teaching. To illustrate, Burroughs et al. (2019) claimed that higher student achievement is associated with teacher quality measured by teaching experience, professional knowledge, and provision of opportunities to learn. Similarly, Toropova et al. (2019) revealed that teacher content knowledge and teacher experience exert an influence on student achievement.

Thus, educational institutions strive to enhance teacher effectiveness in many ways to ensure improvement in the quality of education. Periodic assessment and evaluation of teaching performance are conducted because they provide the necessary feedback about teaching methods, classroom management, engagement strategies, and other dimensions of performance. The results provide impetus for teachers in seeking ways to improve their teaching practice such as incorporating technology or adopting more interactive strategies to enhance students' learning experiences. As pointed out by Ulker (2021), periodic student evaluations can improve teaching quality, allowing educational institutions to maintain their reputation of excellence.

By the same token, the results generated from the evaluation can serve as the basis for the creation of professional development programs. Studies have shown that they bear a positive impact on faculty knowledge and professional competence (Guraya & Chen, 2019), specifically teaching skills (Amin et al., 2024). These faculty development programs address the deficits in teaching vis-à-vis performance standards and expectations of stakeholders such as students, supervisors, and administrators. These



standards provide how institutions and teachers are held accountable for the delivery of high-quality education.

An example of such a standard is the UNESCO Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards (Education International, 2024). This document specifies teaching standards that hope to enhance equitable and quality education for all, which is the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education. Under this framework, the competencies of teachers are expressed in three domains: knowledge and understanding, practice or pedagogy, and teaching relations.

Institutions likewise align themselves with the ASEAN Economic Community or the AEC, investing in education to help build a skilled workforce as the ASEAN moves forward to being a more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable region (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2024). It can be said that high-quality teaching results in students' acquisition of knowledge and skills that lead to economic competitiveness of ASEAN members. Moreover, this alignment with teaching standards in qualifications and competencies facilitates the mobility of educators across ASEAN countries.

The above discussion justifies the analysis of the faculty performance in a college of a state university in the southern part of the Philippines. It was hoped that the interventions to improve the teaching quality in the realms of science and technology, considered the key drivers of economic growth, are research-based. The analysis of teaching performance during the past three academic years provides data-driven insights that inform the administration in making decisions about how the teaching-learning management in the college can be made more efficient and effective.

One way of analyzing teaching performance is through the lens of the constructivist learning theory (Chuang, 2021; Gomez & Valdez, 2019). This theory assumes that people are self-directed and construct knowledge via personal experiences and interaction with the environment. Peer and student feedback conducted at the end of every term provides information that helps teachers make decisions about how to improve their teaching-learning management. The results may not necessarily be compared with faculty evaluation in other state universities, as the change process involves reflection after self-evaluation or hetero-evaluation within the same environment.

Analysis of teaching performance can also be performed under Bloom's Taxonomy framework (Waite et al., 2020), pinpointing what cognitive levels to focus on when identifying areas for professional growth to improve teaching quality. This structured framework allows for the study of teaching practices that cover a range of cognitive skills and meaningful learning experiences for students. Likewise, it provides a guide for teachers to reflect on how they teach and critique their own teaching (Momen, Ebrahimi & Hassan, 2022).

## **Literature review**

The following studies and literature served as the guide and framework of this study. They are presented according to the faculty evaluation performance indicators studied, namely: faculty's commitment, knowledge of subject matter, teaching and independent learning, and management of learning.

### ***Faculty's Commitment***

Faculty commitment to teaching is typically characterized by the extent of a faculty members' dedication to their instructional duties, their students, and the objectives of the institution. According to Oberholster (2005), faculty commitment is described as "the strength of the linkages a faculty member has with a college or university and its goals." This commitment is essential for cultivating a constructive educational atmosphere and attaining elevated standards of instructional efficacy and student involvement.

While faculty members dedicated to their teaching responsibilities generally demonstrate exceptional classroom performance and contribute to the university's overall success (Noor & Sahibuddin, 2021), it is crucial for organizations and institutions to foster a supportive and engaging work environment to sustain elevated levels of faculty commitment and performance. Furthermore, Penuela (2023) concludes that a

combination of emotional attachment, perceived costs of leaving, and a sense of obligation significantly enhances faculty commitment, which in turn positively impacts their performance.

### ***Knowledge of Subject Matter***

Identically, the faculty's knowledge and expertise are significant in the teaching and learning process as well. They impart knowledge, skills and attitudes to their learners and as such, in order to properly deliver the subject matter, the faculty needs to exhibit mastery and provide appropriate understanding to the lessons in class (Jadama, 2014). With this, students would be able to demonstrate the expected skills and competencies needed for future-ready graduates. Rollnick and Mavhunga (2016) added that the subject matter knowledge among teachers would shape up the strategies and pedagogical direction in teaching and learning. This would also lead to better assessments in measuring and exhibiting the target skills (Mudavanhu, 2015).

### ***Teaching and Independent Learning***

Supporting the self-determination theory, Field, Duffy and Huggins (2015) contend that teaching and independent learning would contribute to students' autonomy which boosts their well-being. By the same token, Aithal and Kumar (2019) revealed that autonomy in learning would increase responsibility and accountability among learners. Furthermore, Susanto and Rachbini (2024) emphasized that teachers' learning leadership is important to produce quality outputs through independent learning. Findings also revealed that "learning leadership was significantly correlated to independent learning" using the regression analysis. Similarly, Rui et al. (2024) found that with self-directed learning it would lead to deep learning which contributed to active learning and participation in class.

### ***Management of Learning***

Another key point that the body of literature suggests is that, in order to improve the quality of teaching in higher education, teachers must have the competency in the transformation process where knowledge flows from teacher to student through the enhanced engagement of students in the learning process (Munna & Kalam, 2021). Creating a learner-centered environment optimizes learning as it transfers control of learning to the students (Doyle, 2023), giving them a hand in the innovative design and management of learning (Ovbiagbonhia, Kollöffel & Brok, 2019). This practice has been referred to as "democratic competency" in the work of Kumar (2020) wherein teachers are seen as molders of autonomous learners, encouraging students to be actively involved in the learning process.

Student engagement may refer to a whole class co-creating and working collaboratively with the teacher in making decisions about certain aspects of a course (Bovill, 2020). Research (Muna & Kalam, 2021) has shown that the more the lesson is interactive, the more the learners are engaged to improve their learning experience. Thus, deliberate instructional strategies such as the integration of technology may be explored because its interactive learning activities facilitate student engagement (Sulaiman & Ismael, 2020).

### ***Methodology***

The study used the descriptive research design, systematically obtaining information to describe the situation within one institution in a straightforward manner, excluding any attempt to compare such results with other institutions. It focused entirely on describing the results of the faculty evaluation with the purpose of improving teaching practice according to the dimensions studied. Specifically, it was conducted in the College of Science and Technology Education (CSTE) of the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines (USTP-CDO) located at C.M. Recto, Lapanan, Cagayan de Oro City. It considered the performance evaluation of all the 44 plantilla or permanent faculty members in the college for the past three academic years (i.e., AY 2021-2022, AY 2022-2023, and AY 2023-2024).

Gathering the data on the faculty performance evaluation made use of the university's official learning management system called the University of Science and Technology e-Learning Portal (USTeP). Aside from being used by students to access their course materials and assignments, this platform is used to

evaluate the teachers of the courses they are enrolled in. The USTeP could be accessed in the e-library of the university and through students' mobile phones that are supported by hot spots made readily available for them.. Table 1 presents the total number of students who were officially enrolled in the college and who evaluated their teachers during each semester of the period studied.. The faculty performance evaluation was a requirement in the student clearance that qualifies the students for enrolment in the succeeding semester..

**Table 1** Enrollment data of the CSTE for AY 2021-2022 to AY 2023-2024

AY 2021 - 2022		AY 2022 - 2023		AY 2023 - 2024	
1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester	1 <sup>st</sup> Semester	2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester
2953	2148	2747	2052	2260	2069

To obtain the results of the faculty's performance evaluation during the years studied, a letter request was sent first to the college dean and the vice chancellor for academic affairs. During the CSTE's Mid-Year Refinement and Planning session, the researchers presented the overall rating of the faculty performance evaluation based on a previously acquired data summary. In addition, it was explained that a more comprehensive study has to be conducted to address the recommendations of the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines (AACCUP) and International Standards Organization (ISO) accreditations. This is to ensure that the university would continually improve in delivering the best services and quality education that the students deserve. All regular faculty members were then asked to sign the informed consent for the researchers' access to their individual ratings. Consistent with ethical practice in research, the participants were assured that their names would not be revealed and that the verbatim comments of the students would not be included. This consent was formally endorsed to the Digital Transformation Office (DTO) from which the new set of data and results would be released.

The research instrument used to measure the instructor's teaching effectiveness was the approved National Budget Circular (NBC) 461 faculty performance evaluation tool. Focused on the key result areas of instruction, this instrument is also used as one of the bases for the individual faculty promotion. It consists of the following areas: faculty's commitment, knowledge of subject matter, teaching and independent learning, and management of learning.

The statistical tools employed to present and analyze the results were descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage as well as measures of central tendency such as the mean and standard deviation..

## Results and Discussion

Aligned with the design of describing the situation in a straightforward manner, the processing of data yielded similar results across all six semesters within three academic years, which rendered comparison as moot. Table 2 presents the results and salient features of the students' ratings of faculty performance evaluation for the past three academic years.

**Table 2 Detailed students' faculty performance evaluation results for AY 2021-2022 to AY 2023**

Criteria	AY 2021-2022						AY 2022-2023						AY 2023-2024						Overall Rating		
	1st Semester			2nd Semester			1st Semester			2nd Semester			1st Semester			2nd Semester			Mean	SD	Desc
	Mean	SD	Desc	Mean	SD	Desc	Mean	SD	Desc	Mean	SD	Desc	Mean	SD	Desc	Mean	SD	Desc	Mean	SD	Desc
<b>A. Commitment</b>																					
Demonstrates sensitivity to student's ability and absorb content information	4.42	0.42	VS	4.42	0.41	VS	4.37	0.44	VS	4.36	0.41	VS	4.36	0.41	VS	4.42	0.40	VS	4.39	0.41	VS
Makes self available to students beyond official time.	4.34	0.47	VS	4.28	0.41	VS	4.23	0.42	VS	4.24	0.41	VS	4.24	0.41	VS	4.32	0.42	VS	4.27	0.42	VS
Keeps accurate records of students' performance and prompt submission of same	4.41	0.40	VS	4.39	0.42	VS	4.36	0.42	VS	4.33	0.41	VS	4.33	0.41	VS	4.41	0.41	VS	4.37	0.41	VS
<b>Total Score:</b>	4.39	0.43	VS	4.36	0.41	VS	4.32	0.43	VS	4.31	0.41	VS	4.31	0.41	VS	4.38	0.41	VS	4.34	0.42	VS
<b>B. Knowledge of Subject Matter</b>																					
Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter.	4.45	0.40	VS	4.50	0.39	O	4.45	0.39	VS	4.45	0.35	VS	4.45	0.35	VS	4.54	0.35	O	4.47	0.37	VS
Draws and shares information on the state-of-the-art theory and practice in his/her discipline	4.41	0.43	VS	4.45	0.41	VS	4.39	0.41	VS	4.39	0.36	VS	4.39	0.36	VS	4.48	0.36	VS	4.42	0.39	VS
Integrates subject to practical circumstances and learning intents of students.	4.42	0.44	VS	4.45	0.43	VS	4.35	0.40	VS	4.38	0.38	VS	4.37	0.38	VS	4.45	0.42	VS	4.40	0.41	VS
Demonstrates up-to-date knowledge and/or awareness of current trends and issues of the subject.	4.44	0.44	VS	4.45	0.42	VS	4.40	0.41	VS	4.39	0.37	VS	4.39	0.37	VS	4.48	0.38	VS	4.43	0.40	VS
<b>Total Score:</b>	4.43	0.43	VS	4.46	0.41	VS	4.40	0.40	VS	4.40	0.37	VS	4.40	0.36	VS	4.49	0.38	VS	4.43	0.39	VS
<b>C. Teaching for Independent Learning</b>																					
Creates teaching strategies that allow students to practice using concepts they need to understand (interactive discussion).	4.38	0.41	VS	4.43	0.43	VS	4.31	0.42	VS	4.335	0.382	VS	4.33	0.38	VS	4.42	0.41	VS	4.37	0.40	VS
Enhances student self-esteem and/or gives due recognition to students' performance/potential.	4.35	0.42	VS	4.41	0.45	VS	4.31	0.46	VS	4.288	0.418	VS	4.29	0.42	VS	4.39	0.42	VS	4.34	0.43	VS
Allows students to create their own course objectives and realistically define student-professor roles and make them accountable for their performance.	4.40	0.40	VS	4.43	0.44	VS	4.33	0.43	VS	4.329	0.40	VS	4.33	0.40	VS	4.42	0.43	VS	4.37	0.41	VS
Allows students to think independently and make their own decisions and holding them accountable for their performance-based largely on their success in executing decisions.	4.47	0.39	VS	4.45	0.44	VS	4.38	0.42	VS	4.393	0.371	VS	4.40	0.37	VS	4.46	0.40	VS	4.42	0.40	VS
Encourage students to learn beyond what is required and help/guide the students on how to apply the concepts.	4.45	0.42	VS	4.44	0.42	VS	4.37	0.43	VS	4.381	0.383	VS	4.38	0.38	VS	4.45	0.42	VS	4.41	0.41	VS
<b>Total Score:</b>	4.41	0.41	VS	4.43	0.44	VS	4.34	0.43	VS	4.35	0.39	VS	4.35	0.39	VS	4.43	0.42	VS	4.38	0.41	VS
<b>D. Management of Learning</b>																					
Designs and implements learning conditions and experience that promotes healthy exchange and/or confrontations.	4.36	0.42	VS	4.41	0.44	VS	4.31	0.44	VS	4.33	0.41	VS	4.33	0.41	VS	4.38	0.48	VS	4.35	0.43	VS
Structures/restructures teaching and learning context to enhance the attainment of collective learning objectives	4.29	0.70	VS	4.42	0.44	VS	4.31	0.44	VS	4.17	0.62	VS	4.34	0.39	VS	4.40	0.45	VS	4.32	0.54	VS
<b>Total Score:</b>	4.33	0.56	VS	4.41	0.44	VS	4.31	0.44	VS	4.25	0.61	VS	4.33	0.40	VS	4.39	0.46	VS	4.34	0.49	VS
<b>Final Rate</b>	4.40	0.41	VS	4.42	0.41	VS	4.35	0.42	VS	4.35	0.38	VS	4.35	0.38	VS	4.43	0.40	VS	4.38	0.40	VS

Results in Table 2 indicate that students rated the faculty as "Very Satisfactory" in practically all indicators or criteria. This suggests that during the evaluation period, the faculty members were able to meet and surpass the performance standards required of them on the job. The result also suggested that, although receiving higher assessment ratings from students, faculty still has the opportunity to develop and receive the highest possible score in the designated categories. It was emphasized that instructors might enhance their participation in the teaching and learning process by using student evaluations as a valuable tool. Additionally, the input and assessment of students is crucial in ensuring the caliber of academic programs (Aljendan, 2024) and influencing the structure of an educational institution's curriculum (Puteh & Habil, 2011).

Notably, the findings revealed that the faculty obtained the highest rating of "Outstanding" for *knowledge of subject matter* in a couple of semesters and consistently "Very Satisfactory" for the areas of *commitment*, *teaching for independent learning*, and *management of learning*.

In terms of *commitment*, although rated "Very Satisfactory" in all indicators, it could be gleaned that students needed availability of teachers beyond official time for consultation and other academic related concerns. Not being available could be a result of multi-tasks and intervening tasks that may lead to challenging working conditions (Cumming et al., 2024). Obuh (2023) supported this by mentioning that multi-tasking could affect and reduce job effectiveness. As a remedy to this concern, time availability beyond official hours could be accommodated by the faculty if the university could provide enabling working conditions and work-life balance. The university may look into its practice in areas related to assignment of responsibilities, equitable distribution of the workload, and the like. Freeing teachers from many non-teaching tasks would ensure alignment with the Teaching Practice domain of the UNESCO Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards, which states that teachers should practice effective classroom management having regard to the needs of all students in the classroom.

Leaning towards *knowledge of subject matter*, it was evident that teachers were perceived as outstandingly knowledgeable of what they were teaching in class. This would support the faculty profile where the

majority were full-fledged masters and doctoral degree holders. In addition, based on the Office Performance Commitment and Review (OPCR, which reports the annual accomplishments of the college submitted to the university, a good number of the faculty were well-traveled in different parts of the globe where they presented research papers, and attended conferences as well as other international engagements. These provided them opportunities to be immersed in the best practices of higher educational institutions (HEIs) in the global arena. Hence, advanced education acquired could contribute to more knowledge that could be shared to the students. Students also provided feedback that their teachers demonstrated up-to-date knowledge and awareness on current trends and issues of the subject.

Regarding *teaching for independent learning*, findings revealed that, although teachers were rated “Very Satisfactory,” the lowest mean rating was in the enhancement of students’ self-esteem and recognition of their potential. Since classes were hybrid or purely online during the pandemic, giving appreciation was limited as teachers could not recognize engagement cues from students. Azmi et al. (2022) explored how the pandemic affected students’ self-esteem and depression symptoms, and found out that the pandemic had a negative impact on 41% of participants’ self-esteem. The outcomes of this research emphasize the need for improved support to help students handle the mental health issues connected with the COVID 19 pandemic. Furthermore, Neroni et al. (2022) found out in their study that self-esteem is a predictor of student academic success. Therefore, making time in class to boost student’s self-esteem and potential would be valuable to them. Similarly, even with a rating of “Very Satisfactory,” teachers may need additional competence in guiding students to learn independently, going beyond what is required which could include the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies. Onesi-Ozigagun et al. (2024) highlighted how AI is revolutionizing education in terms of individualized learning experiences.

Analyses also showed that students evaluated the faculty as “Very Satisfactory” in terms of *management of learning*. Specifically, the students see faculty as very competent in designing and implementing learning conditions and experiences that promote collaborative learning. Likewise, the students regarded teachers as very competent in structuring the teaching and learning context to attain learning objectives. In contemporary society, this teaching competence resides in the field of instructional design that utilizes behaviorist approaches and Bloom’s taxonomy of learning (Thurber, 2021). During the process of design, the teacher not only focuses on making content comprehensible but also ensures that learning experiences are useful to address the needs of learners. This means that if teachers are able to correctly perceive what could support academic success of students based on their understanding of learning and behavior theories, they would produce sound instructional designs. Moreover, in creating significant learning experiences, Starr-Glass (2020) pointed out that success is achieved if actual students are engaged in the process. With the positive results of the students’ evaluation during the past three years, it appears that the CSTE teachers were able to consider the students’ learning goals as well as their need for collaboration, specifically in the exchange of ideas in the classroom.

However, the “Very Satisfactory” rating should not spare teachers from pursuing strategies to improve quality in teaching to the fullest extent possible. Studies have shown that teacher quality has a positive impact on student achievement (Fauth, 2019; Ambussaidi & Yang, 2019; Toropova et al., 2019; Gore et al., 2021). Thus, it is the goal of many educational institutions around the world to deliver good teaching (Gore, 2021) and to consider high quality teaching as their central focus (Harrison et al., 2020). Efforts to upscale the teachers’ competency in the management of learning adheres to the teaching practice standards in the UNESCO Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards. In that document, teachers are urged to practice teaching processes and structure learning activities that align with the requirements of the subject content as well as explore variations in teaching and learning that facilitate engagement of students.

## Conclusion

Faculty performance evaluation plays a significant role for the faculty to continually improve and adapt to the changing needs in the teaching and learning processes. The efficiency and effectiveness in the teaching-learning management is important to achieve better understanding of students and ensure that the learners attain academic success.

In this study, the consistent high ratings in the dimensions of *commitment*, *knowledge of subject matter*, *knowledge*, *teaching for independent learning*, and *management of learning* demonstrate the effectiveness of the faculty in fostering a learning environment contributory to student success. This was also evident in the increasing number of passers in the Philippine licensure examination for teachers in 2022 and 2023 who were graduates of the teacher education programs of the college studied.

While the positive evaluation highlights the strength of the faculty, it also underscores the demand for excellence in teaching quality. It has been observed that, except for *knowledge of subject matter*, the ratings fall short of the “Outstanding” rating from the students. Highlighted in this study were areas with the lowest mean ratings in each major criterion, which relate to the time availability of teachers, enhancement of students’ self-esteem and recognition of their potential, and structuring of the teaching and learning contexts.

## Recommendations

Based on the salient findings, it is recommended that the university consider equitable distribution and deloading of duties and responsibilities to provide more time for students’ consultation and other academic related needs. In addition, it may also consider decreasing the student-teacher ratio as this would allow opportunities for more teacher-student interactions, enhancing students’ self-esteem and facilitating recognition of their potential. Another key point refers to the exploration of various strategies in teaching and learning that facilitate engagement of students leading toward achievement of collective learning goals. This could include faculty development programs that train teachers on the integration of technologies such as generative AI and other emerging technology tools, and the enabling policy support to encourage the scholarly use of AI as a teaching and learning tool.

The expansion of this study to include other state colleges and universities, and thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings, is likewise recommended. With this, a comparative study can be undertaken that compares results between the institutions. Another way to expand the study is to include supervisor’s ratings and maybe compare these with students’ ratings. Finally, different evaluation tools can be analyzed, leading to the development of better or universal faculty performance evaluation rating scales or methods for both private and public higher education institutions in the country.

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# International Studies: A Sustainable Approach to Educational Management

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the significant role of International Studies in fostering sustainable development and enhancing global citizenship in Vietnam amidst the challenges of globalization and international integration. It highlights the necessity for a comprehensive understanding of global issues, cultural diversity, and international relations to prepare qualified human resources capable of addressing contemporary challenges. The study emphasizes the importance of intercultural empathy, effective communication, and the functions of international organizations in promoting cooperation and conflict resolution. Furthermore, it discusses the social contributions of International Studies, including the development of cosmopolitan competencies and broadened worldviews among students. By advocating for improved educational practices and international learning opportunities, the paper underscores the potential of International Studies to contribute to Vietnam's strategic goals of proactive engagement in the global arena and sustainable development.

**Keywords:** International Studies, sustainable development, social contributions, studying abroad style

## Introduction

In an era characterized by rapid globalization and intricate interdependence among nations, the role of education in fostering sustainable development has never been more critical. International Studies, as a field of academic inquiry, emerges as a vital discipline that equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of global issues. This paper explores the significant contributions of International Studies to sustainable development in Vietnam, emphasizing the cultivation of global citizenship and intercultural competencies among students. As Vietnam positions itself for proactive engagement in the international arena, the need for a well-informed and capable workforce becomes paramount. By examining the intersections of education, cultural diversity, and international relations, this study underscores the potential of International Studies to not only enhance individual understanding but also to contribute meaningfully to the broader goals of sustainable development. Through a comprehensive analysis of educational practices and the promotion of international learning opportunities, this paper advocates for a transformative approach to education that prepares students to address contemporary challenges and foster a more sustainable and peaceful world.

## *The important role of International Studies in Vietnam*

Nowadays, the increasing economic, political and cultural relations on the international level require an increasing level of basic and reliable knowledge about the development and issues of regions in the world. In the context of globalization and economic integration taking place vigorously in all regions of the world, Vietnam has clearly identified one of the country's strategic goals as proactive and active international integration. The growing need for international integration leads to a constantly increasing demand for qualified human resources in international

issues. International studies are an indispensable field of study in the training and research system of a country, especially for Vietnam because of the country's increasing need for integration into the region and the world (Pham, 2012).

In other words, if a country wants to develop prosperously and peacefully, it needs to improve the quality of human resources and knowledge about the outside world. International studies are activities that directly impact the improvement of intelligence, understanding, and application of scientific and technical knowledge into human production to promptly access new information, update, enrich knowledge, and creative capacity of the world. On the other hand, it also helps people enhance their inner strength and knowledge level to understand and sympathize with cultures around the world, which is the basis of sustainable peace. The strategy of international education and training creates, encourages and promotes all resources in society to open up opportunities for exchange with other countries, first of all, human resources serving the development of foreign affairs. People equipped with international skills will be more creative and solve problems effectively and proactively.

More specifically, Vietnam must make even greater efforts to keep up with the increasingly volatile flow of international relations. Vietnam has experienced decades of war and turmoil that have greatly affected its economic and social development. Vietnam needs to study the world more to better understand global trends, improve economic and foreign policies, and respond to security challenges. This helps improve competitiveness, attract investment, and expand cooperation opportunities. In addition, grasping international information also supports Vietnam in areas such as environmental protection and sustainable development, thereby contributing to improving the quality of life of its people. After 30 years of integration and development since 1986, despite many challenges, Vietnam has entered a period of deeper international integration and stronger, more comprehensive development. The more Vietnam studies the world, the more it sees the need for international integration and cooperation. The first international organization Vietnam joined after reunification was the United Nations, in 1977. With significant support from the United Nations, Vietnam issued the National Action Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2017, the first Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2018 and the list of 158 nationalized SDG indicators (VSDG index) in January 2019 (United Nations of Viet Nam).

### ***International studies - Studying abroad style***

Studying abroad has become a way to learn about other cultures, an important component of becoming an educated person, successful in work and becoming a global citizen. Education abroad for global development, intercultural competence, intercultural maturity and intercultural sensitivity of students (Braskamp, 2009). The concept of studying abroad today is also a fairly open international movement with the need to build adaptive skills in a new environment. Studying in advanced educational systems in the world is the dream of many young people. It has become a trend with the idea that learning about other cultures is an important part of becoming an educated, successful professional and considered a global citizen (Bok, 2006). Understanding other cultures enhances empathy and communication skills, which are crucial in today's interconnected world. This cultural awareness not only fosters collaboration but also prepares professionals to navigate diverse environments effectively. However, not everyone has the economic ability to pursue this dream. Although the international studies program of Vietnamese universities cannot meet the geographical shift like studying abroad, it can meet the issues of knowledge about culture, politics and society of places around the world. The quality of learning in international studies often depends on the program and the university, but it can provide a richer academic experience due to cultural diversity and approaches. Currently, the training objective of the International Studies major in Vietnam focuses on helping students master basic and systematic knowledge of International Studies, including knowledge blocks on history and culture - world

civilization, international relations, economics and law of Vietnam and the world, regions and continents, on foreign relations and foreign policies of Vietnam. In addition, the curriculum also equips students with the skills to fluently use a foreign language for professional research and practice. At the same time, it helps students grasp methods of researching international issues and methods of international communication. Thus, the International Studies major is also a way to help learners experience global cultures as if they were studying directly in those countries. In addition, this major also provides basic knowledge of social sciences and humanities, develops practical skills in foreign languages and information technology in study and work; creative thinking and lifelong learning skills to work in a global environment. Studying international studies often involves understanding global cultures and systems, which can lead to studying abroad to experience and apply that knowledge more practically. International studies can indeed be seen as a form of study abroad that brings many benefits to students.



Figure 1: the relationship between International Studies and Study abroad style

### ***Social contribution of International Studies***

Such experiences are characterized typically by their constant negotiation, reproduction, expansion of their social, cultural, and professional identities in an attempt. The attempts' meaning in their everyday life within and across their places of attachment or localities of perceived belonging. There remains a dearth of empirical evidence and conceptual exploration of how students may influence and continue to shape returnees' identities, values, and behavior in their home country contexts (Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015). This paper has shown that transnational includes the following:

- Embeddedness (Krippner et al., 2004; Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015; Long, 2013)
- Cosmopolitan competence (Kim, 2019; Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015; Long, 2013)
- Broadened worldview (Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015, Metzner, R. , 2017). )
- International awareness (Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015; Burnouf, L., 2004).)
- Intercultural empathy (Broome, B. J. , 2017; Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015)

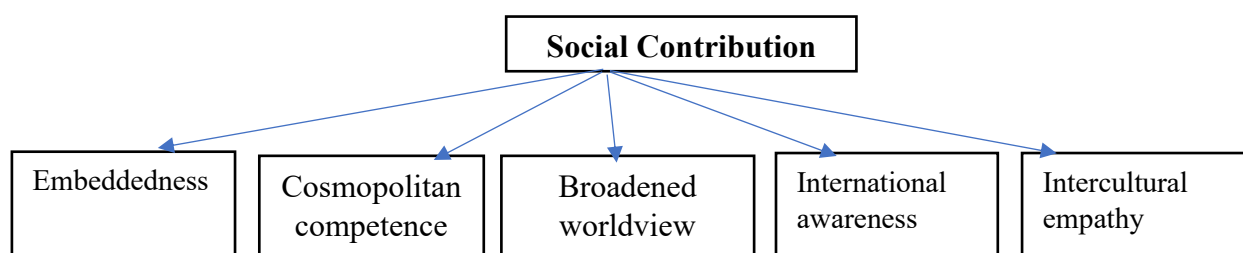


Figure 2: The model of Social Contribution

### ***Embeddedness***

International studies create links between different countries and cultures, encourage cooperation and information exchange, and contribute to global understanding and peace. Most areas of sociology are based on one central idea, that of embeddedness (Krippner et al., 2004). They establish strong relationships and connections, bringing foreign benefits back home through international connections is considered the most obvious achievement of studying abroad. That is related to Gu & Schweisfurth (2015) about community involvement. Embeddedness in international studies often refers to how deeply integrated or connected a subject or phenomenon is within a specific cultural, political, or social context. Students who study international studies will often develop a

sensitivity to cultural differences and cross-cultural understanding. They can better understand the social norms, values and customs of other cultures, helping them interact more effectively and sensitively in multicultural environments. Students who are equipped with cross-cultural understanding can provide diverse and creative perspectives, helping to develop sustainable development solutions that are appropriate to different contexts. This promotes international cooperation and knowledge sharing, thereby enhancing the ability to respond to global challenges and always have the idea of world peace, love the independence of nations.

### ***Cosmopolitan competence***

Students are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to work in a multinational environment, including international communication and project management skills. Universities are increasingly pursuing “world-class status” and prioritizing internationalization efforts (Kim, 2019). International competencies spontaneously formed through daily cross-country study and work are covered (Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015) research, reaffirmed through the sharing of riders. Immersion in a variety of overseas activities has contributed to the development of the international capacities. They have a deeper understanding of how foreigners work, how an organization operates, and how foreigners deal with work situations. This issue makes them more trusted by international organizations in Vietnam because they have the same working culture. These advantages of studying abroad show the international awareness importance, and they see it as a potential workplace asset highly valued by employers. International competencies of international students typically include a broad understanding of global issues, cross-cultural communication and negotiation skills, and the ability to analyze and solve international problems. They also need to be able to work effectively in a multinational environment and know how to use international information to make informed decisions. The international competence of international students is important for sustainable development. International students are able to understand and analyze global issues, such as climate change, poverty, and inequality. They can contribute to sustainable solutions by developing effective international cooperation policies and strategies. Their cross-cultural communication and negotiation skills help create strong international partnerships. This is important in solving global problems, as sustainable development often involves many stakeholders from different countries. It engagement with the world increasingly fosters multicultural identities, international identities, rather than the single cultural identities that were previously considered the norm. And the call of global education is to act as a midwife in the birth of such identities, helping monocultural students become truly international (Long, 2013). Overall, the international competence of international students not only helps improve understanding and problem solving at the global level, but also plays an important role in promoting sustainable development efforts around the world.

### ***Broadened worldview***

Both international studies and study abroad expose students to different cultures, perspectives and lifestyles, thereby broadening their worldview. This not only enriches their knowledge but also helps develop their ability to think flexibly and sensitively to global issues. What environment do you live in lead worldview is like that? A person has travel opportunities to many parts of the world while studying about foreign country, their worldwide also increases. This issue again underscores what Gu and Schweinfurt (2015) mentions in research on expanded international worldview. The experience value here refers to wisdom and worldview. International studies students broaden their worldview through exposure to diverse global cultures, politics, and economies. They learn to view issues from multiple perspectives, understand the interactions between nations and international organizations, and become aware of the impacts of international events on local communities. This helps them develop the ability to think holistically and solve problems more creatively and effectively. International studies students’ broadened worldview has far-reaching implications for sustainable development. Exposure to multiple cultures helps students understand and respect diversity. The worldview in international studies is often expanded

by exploring different perspectives, such as realism, liberalism, and structuralism. These perspectives help to better understand the relationships between nations, cultures, and the global economy. Contemporary world culture is moving toward an expanded worldview that recognizes both the material and the spiritual dimensions of our existence (Metzner, R. , 2017). This is important in developing sustainable development solutions, as problems and solutions need to be tailored to different cultural and social contexts. They recognize that sustainability issues are often complex and interrelated. This understanding helps them design sustainable solutions that not only solve immediate problems but also create long-term, positive impacts. With an expanded worldview, students are able to access and apply new methods and technologies in sustainable development projects. They can apply innovations and technologies from other countries to solve local challenges. Thus, the expanded worldview of international studies students not only helps them understand and address sustainability issues from different perspectives but also contributes to the establishment of more comprehensive and effective solutions in achieving global sustainable development goals.

### ***International awareness***

International awareness is the ability to understand and analyze global issues. Both international studies and study abroad encourage exposure to diverse perspectives, which helps develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This is especially important in a globalized world where events in one place can have an impact on many others. In the study by Gu and Schweinfurt (2015), the international students' international competence is recognized despite their different professional expertise and confirm by this study. Each own specificity top – notch, specialized, and spearhead knowledge that is only understood by that field experts, so outsiders cannot assess. International awareness of international students is the ability to understand and evaluate global issues from different perspectives. They understand the importance of globalization and that global issues do not only affect one country or region but are intricately connected and interacted between countries and regions. Cultural and social understanding helps students understand and evaluate cultural and social diversity around the world. They are aware of different values, customs, and perspectives across cultures. From there, they know how to respect and integrate different perspectives and ways of life, and understand the challenges and opportunities that cultural diversity brings. In addition, students understand the functions and roles of international organizations such as the United Nations, IMF, World Bank, and non-governmental organizations in solving global problems. Students develop the skills to communicate effectively with people from different cultures and countries, which is important in building international relationships and cooperation. They are able to participate in international negotiations and conflict resolution, helping to create sustainable cooperative agreements and solutions. The international awareness of international studies students helps them develop a comprehensive view of the world and global issues, and equips them with the tools and skills needed to contribute effectively to addressing global challenges and opportunities. Burnouf concluded that all students need to learn about global issues in school in order to become living and practicing citizens in our ever-changing global society (Burnouf, L., 2004).

### ***Intercultural empathy***

By experiencing and learning about other cultures, you will gain a better understanding of other people's values, beliefs and ways of life. This helps you build better relationships and create an inclusive environment. In intercultural situations, empathy is more complex and more difficult, but it is a key competency for effective intercultural communication. In intercultural empathy, understanding is not viewed as a product, but as an ongoing process occurring between communicators. It is created during interaction, emerging as we listen to one another respectfully and engage in a mutual process of exploring and learning together (Broome, B. J. , 2017). Intercultural empathy are a factor that helps foreign learners feel confident and satisfied when

sharing their study abroad experiences, which is also a contribution to society (Gu & Schweinfurt, 2015). Communication helps people get closer together. Intercultural empathy among international studies students can have a powerful impact on sustainable development in a number of ways. International studies students with intercultural empathy can easily understand and work with different cultures. This helps promote effective cooperation between countries and communities, which is important in solving global problems such as climate change, poverty and sustainable development. When groups of people from different cultures work together, they can come up with more creative and effective solutions to sustainability challenges, because they incorporate different perspectives. Intercultural empathy can reduce conflicts and increase understanding between communities and countries. When international studies students understand and respect cultural diversity, they can help build peaceful and cooperative relationships, which are important for sustainable development. Intercultural empathy facilitates the sharing of knowledge and experiences across different cultures. This not only enhances individual knowledge but also contributes to global sustainable development by learning and adopting advanced methods and technologies from other cultures. In short, intercultural empathy not only helps international students work more effectively in diverse environments but also plays an important role in promoting sustainable development by facilitating cooperation, creativity and peace.

### ***Social contribution of International Studies to make a sustainable development***

Promoting global citizenship often involves educating students about peace, human rights, and how to implement them in practice. This helps them become responsible and well-informed global citizens (Long, 2013). International Studies contributes greatly to the sustainable development of society, helps to better understand global issues, shape foreign, economic and environmental policies, and ensure that international agreements are oriented towards sustainable development, reduce conflicts and promote peace. The mindset of International Studies students helps to encourage the participation of the international community, encouraging them to participate in activities towards sustainable development.



Figure 3: The relationship between Social Contribution and Sustainable Development

### ***Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education and Sustainable Training Opportunities***

Among the SDGs, SDG 4 Education Quality is of the highest importance. Beyond the fact that education is a key variable in a country's development, SDG 4 is positioned as a key factor for change, a change which is more qualitative than quantitative because it assumes that sustainable development (and its education) leads to real changes in individual behavior (Diemer, A., Khushik, F., & Ndiaye, A., 2020). To achieve Goal 4, significant investment in educational infrastructure is essential, encompassing not only the enhancement of teacher quality but also the provision of diverse and rich teaching materials. This challenge extends beyond education, requiring a concerted effort to ensure that everyone has access to training opportunities. In the development of International Studies, specific solutions are needed to align with the demands of Technology 4.0. Teaching methods must evolve, with lecturers adopting diverse and contemporary strategies that are regularly updated to stay relevant. Professional development is key, necessitating investments in short-term training courses abroad and specialized programs that deepen lecturers' subject knowledge, refine their teaching skills, and keep them informed about global educational trends. For students, improving the quality of learning involves upgrading facilities to create a comfortable and effective learning environment. Furthermore, fostering an international learning atmosphere through cultural exchange activities and offering students opportunities for short-term

courses or exchange programs abroad will significantly enhance their educational experience and global perspective, ensuring they are well-prepared for the challenges of a globalized world.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the pivotal role of International Studies in promoting sustainable development and enhancing global citizenship in Vietnam. As the nation navigates the complexities of globalization and international integration, the insights gained from this field of study are invaluable. By fostering intercultural empathy, effective communication, and a comprehensive understanding of global issues, International Studies equips students with the competencies necessary to address contemporary challenges. The emphasis on experiential learning and exposure to diverse cultures not only broadens students' worldviews but also empowers them to contribute to sustainable solutions that are contextually relevant and culturally sensitive. Moreover, the findings underscore the necessity for educational reforms that align with the demands of a rapidly changing global landscape. Investments in educational infrastructure, innovative teaching methodologies, and international learning opportunities are essential to cultivate a generation of informed and proactive global citizens. As Vietnam continues to strive for sustainable development, the integration of International Studies into its educational framework will be crucial in shaping a workforce capable of fostering cooperation, reducing conflicts, and promoting peace. Ultimately, the potential of International Studies extends beyond individual academic achievement; it serves as a catalyst for societal transformation and a pathway toward a more sustainable and harmonious world. By embracing the principles of this discipline, Vietnam can enhance its strategic goals and contribute meaningfully to the global community, ensuring a brighter future for generations to come.

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**This research is funded by Funds for Science and Technology Development of the University of Danang under project number B2022-DN05-03**

# Exploring Linguistic Patterns: Cultural Insights

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## ABSTRACT

Culture can primarily be expressed through language, and examining linguistic structures enables individuals to see the diversity of cultures that exist both within and between educational institutions. The primary objectives were to assess language behaviors in various institutional settings and elucidating the correlation between linguistic patterns and cultural backgrounds among college students. The results showed that college students who had attended both public and private universities in Northern Mindanao had different patterns of linguistic behavior. The findings showed a diversity of idioms, patterns of language use, and communication styles that reflected the many different cultures present in these learning environments. The study employed a mixed-methods approach to assess students' favorite languages, validated by triangulating data from qualitative and quantitative techniques to offer a comprehensive understanding of linguistic trends. By discerning these connections, this study contributed valuable insights into the interplay between language, culture, and higher education experiences.

**Keywords:** Linguistic patterns, cultural insights, cultural diversity

## INTRODUCTION

In this increasingly interconnected world, understanding linguistic patterns and their cultural implications has become paramount. Linguistic diversity reflects the rich tapestry of human culture, encompassing a multitude of dialects, languages, and communication styles. Recent studies have underscored the intricate relationship between language and culture, emphasizing the profound impact of cultural context on linguistic expression (Iwasaki, 2021). As societies evolve and interact, the exploration of linguistic patterns provides valuable insights into cultural norms, social dynamics, and identity construction. Moreover, advancements in technology and globalization have facilitated the exchange of linguistic practices, leading to cross-cultural communication and the emergence of new hybrid languages (Agha, 2020). Therefore, this research seeks to delve into linguistic patterns across diverse cultural contexts, elucidating the interplay between language, culture, and societal structures.

Furthermore, recent scholarship has highlighted the significance of linguistic analysis in uncovering cultural insights and understanding societal phenomena. For instance, studies have examined the linguistic markers of identity formation within multicultural communities, shedding light on the complex processes of cultural assimilation and identity negotiation (Duff, 2023). Additionally, research has explored the role of language in shaping intergroup dynamics and power structures, demonstrating how linguistic practices can reinforce or challenge existing social hierarchies (Fought, 2022). By investigating linguistic patterns within specific cultural contexts, this study aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of cultural diversity and foster greater appreciation for the intricacies of human communication. Through interdisciplinary approaches that integrate linguistics, anthropology, and cultural studies, we can unravel the complexities of linguistic variation and its implications for cross-cultural understanding and social cohesion.

## METHODOLOGY

To explore linguistic patterns and cultural insights, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Firstly, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to examine recent research findings on linguistic diversity, cultural norms, and identity

construction. This review drew upon a range of scholarly sources, including journal articles, books, and conference proceedings, to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between language and culture (Li & Lee, 2021). Additionally, ethnographic methods such as participant observation and interviews were employed to gather qualitative data from individuals representing diverse cultural backgrounds. These qualitative insights offered contextualized understandings of linguistic practices and cultural dynamics within specific communities (Makoni & Pennycook, 2020).

Secondly, quantitative analysis was conducted to identify linguistic patterns and trends across different cultural contexts. Surveys and questionnaires were administered to a sample population, eliciting responses on language use, attitudes, and perceptions of cultural identity. Statistical techniques, including frequency analysis and correlation tests, were employed to analyze the quantitative data and identify patterns of linguistic variation (Rubdy & Alsagoff, 2022). Moreover, computational methods such as text mining and sentiment analysis were utilized to examine large datasets of written or spoken language, revealing patterns of discourse and cultural representation (Argamon et al., 2021).

Finally, triangulation of data from qualitative and quantitative methods was conducted to validate findings and provide a comprehensive understanding of linguistic patterns and cultural insights. Through triangulation, this study aimed to mitigate biases inherent in individual research methods and enhance the validity and reliability of the results (Denzin & Lincoln, 2020). Additionally, thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring themes and patterns across the qualitative data, enriching the interpretation of findings (Braun & Clarke, 2019). By integrating multiple methodological approaches, this research contributed to a nuanced exploration of linguistic diversity and cultural dynamics, enhancing scholarly knowledge and promoting cross-cultural understanding in an increasingly globalized world.

## **FINDINGS**

The analysis of qualitative data revealed rich insights into the interplay between language and culture. Participant observation and interviews illuminated the nuanced ways in which linguistic practices are embedded within cultural contexts. For instance, participants from marginalized communities often described code-switching as a strategy for navigating social hierarchies and asserting cultural identity (Li & Lee, 2021). Moreover, the use of linguistic markers such as accent and dialect served as powerful symbols of belonging and exclusion within specific cultural groups (Makoni & Pennycook, 2020). These findings underscored the dynamic nature of language as a social phenomenon, shaped by historical, social, and cultural factors.

Quantitative analysis complemented these qualitative findings by providing statistical insights into linguistic patterns across diverse cultural contexts. Surveys and questionnaires revealed significant correlations between language use and cultural identity, with respondents expressing preferences for particular language varieties based on their perceived cultural affiliations. Additionally, computational methods such as text mining elucidated patterns of discourse and representation in online communication, highlighting the ways in which language reflects and perpetuates cultural stereotypes (Argamon et al., 2021). These quantitative findings contributed to a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between language and culture, shedding light on the ways in which linguistic practices both reflect and shape cultural norms and identities.

Triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data further enriched the findings, highlighting convergent themes and providing a holistic understanding of linguistic diversity and cultural dynamics. By integrating multiple methodological approaches, this study revealed the multifaceted nature of language as a vehicle for cultural expression and negotiation. The findings underscored the importance of recognizing linguistic diversity as a fundamental aspect of cultural identity and social cohesion (Denzin & Lincoln, 2020). Moreover, they emphasized the need for culturally responsive approaches to language education and communication, fostering inclusivity and mutual understanding in diverse cultural contexts. Overall, the findings of this study contribute to ongoing scholarly discourse on language and culture, offering valuable insights for researchers, educators, and policymakers alike.

## CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study underscore the intricate relationship between language and culture, highlighting the ways in which linguistic practices are shaped by and contribute to cultural norms and identities. Through a mixed-methods approach, this research has provided a comprehensive understanding of linguistic diversity and cultural dynamics, shedding light on the complex processes of identity construction, social interaction, and cultural representation. From the qualitative analysis of participant observations and interviews to the quantitative examination of linguistic patterns and trends, this study has elucidated the multifaceted nature of language as a social phenomenon.

One key takeaway from this research is the recognition of language as a powerful tool for cultural expression and negotiation. Linguistic practices such as code-switching and language variation serve not only as markers of cultural identity but also as strategies for navigating social interactions and asserting cultural belonging. Understanding the cultural contexts in which language is situated enables educators, policymakers, and practitioners to develop more inclusive and culturally responsive approaches to language education and communication.

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of linguistic diversity in our increasingly globalized world. Recognizing and valuing linguistic differences can create more inclusive and equitable spaces for intercultural communication and collaboration. Moving forward, continued exploration of the complex interplay between language and culture is essential, fostering dialogue and collaboration across disciplinary boundaries. Ongoing research and engagement can contribute to building more inclusive and culturally diverse societies, where linguistic diversity is celebrated as a source of strength and enrichment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations emerge for educators, policymakers, and practitioners to enhance cross-cultural understanding and promote linguistic diversity:

1. **Develop Culturally Responsive Language Education:** Educators should incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices that recognize and value students' linguistic diversity. This includes integrating students' cultural backgrounds into language instruction and providing opportunities for them to share their linguistic experiences in the classroom.
2. **Foster Intercultural Communication Skills:** Schools and institutions should prioritize the development of intercultural communication skills to prepare students for global citizenship. This involves promoting empathy, respect, and open-mindedness towards different cultural and linguistic perspectives.
3. **Provide Professional Development:** Educators and language professionals should engage in ongoing professional development to enhance their cultural competence and proficiency in addressing the needs of diverse learners. This may include training on culturally responsive pedagogy, language assessment strategies, and effective communication techniques.
4. **Promote Linguistic Equity:** Policymakers should implement policies and practices that promote linguistic equity, ensuring equal access to educational resources and opportunities for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This may involve providing support services such as bilingual education programs, language support services, and culturally relevant curriculum materials.
5. **Encourage Community Engagement:** Schools and institutions should actively engage with local communities to promote linguistic diversity and foster positive attitudes towards multilingualism. This may involve partnering with community organizations, hosting cultural events, and providing resources for language learning outside the classroom.

By implementing these recommendations, educators, policymakers, and practitioners can create more inclusive and equitable learning environments that celebrate linguistic diversity and promote cross-cultural understanding. Embracing linguistic diversity as a valuable asset enriches educational experiences and prepares students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

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# Assessment and Evaluation of the Transition Skills of Students with Special Needs: Basis for a Skills Enhancement Program

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## ABSTRACT

Assessing and evaluating transition skills is an essential initial step before permitting students with special needs to start acquiring experience outside of the classroom. After completing this phase, students become more proficient in the skill of working independently. The purpose of this study is to assess students' transition skills and develop a skills enhancement program in order to further develop their skills. A developmental doctor's assessment, which identified the specific causes of every student's disability, was utilized to purposely select six students. The findings of the study revealed that students' pre-assessment skills and knowledge in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping were inadequate. On the other hand, a transition skills training program's post-assessment revealed a notable improvement in the competencies. The training developed the students' transition skills such that they were able to master some of the skills in baking and pastry production and housekeeping. In addition, the students were able to carry out some tasks without teacher assistance and completed tasks independently. Based on the findings, it was recommended that schools serving students with special needs implement transition programs focused on skills enhancement training with comprehensive skills assessments. Furthermore, the study proposed a trainer's training for school administrators, school heads, general education teachers as well as special education teachers that would enable a successful implementation of the training program. Additionally, collaboration between parents, school heads and teachers was encouraged as this fosters a pooling of expertise and resources which leads to the sustainability of the program. A time series evaluation to ensure continuous monitoring was likewise suggested.

**Keywords:** Transition program, Transition skills, Skills enhancement, Students with Special Needs, Pre- and Post-assessment

## INTRODUCTION

Employers hesitate hiring students with special needs, even though many of these students possess basic learning skills and have the potential to acquire vocational skills through training. Despite their capabilities, students with special needs lack opportunities to develop work skills, gain work experience, and maximize their potential in the work force [1]. Moreover, they are faced with difficulties in accessing training to acquire transition skills that would enable them to navigate the work environment [2] [3].

Transition programs are particularly crafted for students with special needs, equipping them with necessary skills that are needed in the workplace. These programs contain instruction and activities related to teamwork, responsibilities and work ethics that aim to strengthen the students' transition skills as they move out of classrooms [4]. The competencies that are developed through these programs can lead to employment opportunities which enhances their self-confidence.

Specially designed for students with special needs, these transition programs are tailored to the students' capabilities to facilitate a smooth learning process and build confidence. The activities revolve around functional and real-world skills, and are trade/craft- or career-specific. In effect, the curriculum equips students with skills that are critical for their survival in both the workplace and the community [5]. Apart

from undergoing the training in a classroom environment, the students undergo work immersion. This provides them with practical, hands-on experience in a real-world work environment that teaches them how to navigate the workplace dynamics. For this component in the training program, collaboration among special education teachers, school administrators, parents and other educators is vital. These stakeholders in the students' future bring together a well-rounded, supportive, and effective learning experience.

Social and emotional readiness is another aspect that the transition program addresses, which need to be thoroughly assessed to gauge their ability to cope [6]. Students with special needs often face challenges due to limited communication and social skills, low self-confidence, and hesitation to interact with co-workers. Additionally, they may feel uncomfortable seeking guidance from supervisors and may require more time to adjust compared with non-disabled workers. They may also struggle when criticized or corrected or feel alienated during the first days of work as they attempt to follow instructions and procedures [7].

In 2020, a transition skills program was introduced at a special education school in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. This program offered skills training in areas such as bread and pastry production, cookery, housekeeping, horticulture, food processing and preservation, and wellness massage. With a wide array of program offers, the teachers struggled with delivering instruction and practical tasks, necessitating intensive training for skill mastery.

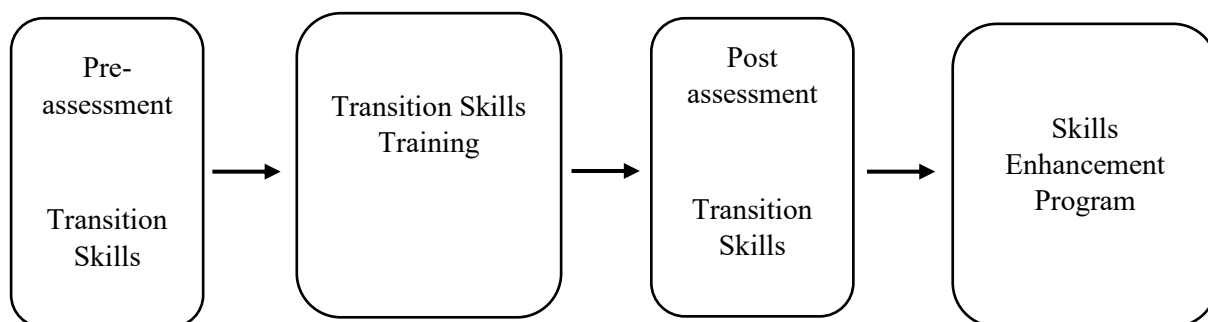
Thus, at a national high school within the same city, teachers determined that they would only teach bread and pastry production as well as housekeeping because these had clear and practical skill paths for students. The teachers observed that students showed a particular interest in baking due to its sensory engagement, involving smell, taste, and texture, making it an enjoyable activity. Both baking and housekeeping feature structured processes and clear steps, providing comfort and ease for students who thrive on routine and predictability [8]. An integral part of this special program was the collaboration between parents and teachers, which hoped to provide the support that students needed to be successful trainees [9].

## **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to assess the transition skills gained by students with special needs in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping under a special training program. The results would then become a springboard for the design of an enhanced transition skills program that addresses the challenge of sustainability and that ensures skills mastery.

1. What are the pre-assessment and post-assessment of student's transition skills in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping?
2. Does the transition skills training have a significant effect in the development of the students' skills in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping?
3. What skills enhancement program can be designed to improve the students' transition skills in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping?

## Framework of the Study



## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This single group pre-post intervention study determined the changes in selected competencies in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping following a special transition skills training program. Prior to the training, a pre-assessment of the students' competencies was conducted to evaluate their current skill levels. The assessment focused on identifying the skills students had already acquired, practiced, and were in the process of mastering, with the goal of pinpointing gaps in their learning skills that had been taught but not yet fully mastered.

After the transition skills training, post assessment was conducted to determine the skills with lower levels of mastery. The skills highlighted for re-demonstration and repeated performance by the students to enhance proficiency, with follow-up evaluations to assess whether the skills have been mastered. The assessment was performed by Home Economics teachers and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) accredited assessor. The training spans six months to ensure mastery and student autonomy, with safety precautions in place to protect the well-being of all participants.

The training sessions took place at the school's Home Economics building which included a visit to one beach resort and one bakery shop to gain real-world experience in the workplace environment, according to the training design.

### Participants

There were six students in the transition class of a national high school in the city who participated in this study. With ages ranging from 18 to 30, they were purposely chosen based on the assessment of a developmental doctor who identified their specific type of disability.

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### Pre- and Post-Assessment in Bread and Pastry Production

The pre-assessment of students' transition skills in bread and pastry production generated an overall rating of *very unsatisfactory*. As shown in Table 1, students lacked knowledge and skills in the seven areas of competencies. Despite the clear and simple explanation with detailed demonstration, students failed to show mastery of the skills due to their inability in grasping knowledge and understanding the process. There was confusion about the sequence of tasks, indicating a need for repeated demonstrations and mental conditioning to reinforce task performance.

Various techniques were employed to help students better understand the concepts and skills required for independent task completion. For example, to help them identify the utensils, tools, and equipment used in baking and pastry production, repeated activities were done for familiarization and mastery. However,



the observations revealed that students found difficulty in selecting, measuring, and weighing ingredients as well as choosing the appropriate equipment. They struggled in preparing, filling and decorating the pastry products. Students were also reluctant to read the labels and hardly explained the usage of each ingredient, shrugging their shoulders to indicate a lack of understanding.

Apparently, the students needed full assistance in performing the tasks to develop their confidence in acquiring the necessary skills. They needed additional time to process the steps and procedures involved. Repetition was deemed essential in demonstrating the tasks to be remembered and retained for a longer time. As what one study [12] pointed out, when a task is repeated often, the brain forms new pathways thereby optimizing the performance of the skill.

The post-assessment of students in bread and pastry production, as evaluated by two teachers and a TESDA accreditor, generated scores that ranged from *fair* to *satisfactory*. While the students' performance varied across task and competencies, they demonstrated the ability to prepare pastry and bakery products by following the correct steps and procedures after the training. They properly mixed and combined dry and wet ingredients. They filled and decorated pastry products using icing successfully. The students also effectively used the tools and equipment such as hand mixers, ovens, electric stoves, and rice cookers. Initially, they were hesitant to use these tools but with the guidance and motivation to handle and experience them, they became comfortable and capable of using it.

**Table 1: Pre-and Post-assessment of Transition Skills in Bread and Pastry Production**

Competency	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment		
	Mean	SD	Description	Mean	SD	Description
Preparing bakery products	1.13	0.10	VU	3.73	0.21	S
Preparing pastry products	1.07	0.10	VU	3.73	0.21	S
Decorating & presenting pastry products	1.00	0.00	VU	3.33	0.52	F
Storing pastry products	1.00	0.00	VU	3.33	0.52	F
Preparing sponge cakes	1.00	0.00	VU	3.73	0.21	S
Decorating sponge cakes	1.00	0.00	VU	3.33	0.52	F
Preparing and using fillings	1.00	0.00	VU	3.33	0.52	F
Overall	1.02		VU	3.50		S

Legend: VU - very unsatisfactory; F- fair; S - satisfactory

Based on their experiences, students completed their tasks on time, overcoming challenges such as adapting to a new learning mode, communicating effectively, understanding instructions, and finishing tasks promptly. With adequate training and emotional support, they accomplished their tasks with self-confidence and pride. The successful completion of tasks provides students with valuable work experience. With the assistance and support from teachers, supervisors, and parents, students with special needs can overcome challenges [10]. Therefore, the students' success relies not only on the training they receive but also on the commitment of individuals who serve as mentors.

### Pre- and Post-Assessment in Housekeeping

The results of the pre-assessment of students' transition housekeeping skills, as displayed in Table 2, show *satisfactory* to *very unsatisfactory* ratings. Although the housekeeping assignments needed of the students

were basic and applicable to real-world scenarios, they proved to be difficult for them to finish. For instance, it took more time to wash dirty dishes, pots, and pans, as well as to clean kitchen tables, chairs, and appliances. Complete assistance was also needed while preparing beds and cots, taking out pillows and linens, and examining beds and mattresses. It seemed that they were not accustomed with performing these basic tasks because these were handled by their parents or household helpers at home. Additionally, students struggled with reading and following instructions. Prioritizing repetition and simplicity helped to ensure that instructions were clear and understandable for them.

By the end of the training phase, students completed tasks independently and had developed the necessary skill set, eliminating the need for further teacher assistance. Students performed reasonably well in cleaning surfaces, floors, and the kitchen. Notably, students were able to carry out some tasks without teacher assistance and performed these tasks with growing confidence, even though the execution was not always perfect. While most of the competencies were performed fairly by the students, as evident during the post-assessment, there was one competency that was performed unsatisfactorily. The increase of skill performance level in wearing of personal protective equipment was not noted after the training.

**Table 2: Pre-and Post-Assessment of Transition Skills in Housekeeping**

Competency	Pre-Assessment			Post-Assessment		
	Mean	SD	Description	Mean	SD	Description
Using appropriate cleaning tools, equipment, supplies, and materials.	1.33	0.52	VU	3.33	0.52	F
Maintaining cleaning equipment	1.00	0.00	VU	3.00	0.00	F
Using personal protective equipment correctly	2.00	0.00	U	2.00	0.00	U
Cleaning surfaces and floors	2.00	0.00	U	4.00	0.00	S
Cleaning furnishing and fixtures	1.25	0.39	VU	3.50	0.77	F
Making up beds and cots	1.83	0.41	VU	3.33	0.52	F
Cleaning toilet and bathroom	1.14	0.00	VU	3.43	0.00	F
Cleaning kitchen	1.00	0.00	VU	4.00	0.00	S
Overall	1.51		U	3.66		S

Legend: VU - very unsatisfactory; U – unsatisfactory; F - fair; S - satisfactory

### Effect of the Transition Skills Training

Table 3 reveals that there was a highly significant effect of the transition skills training in the development of students' skills, both in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping. This indicates that the training would be the platform in preparing them in the real workforce and be given the space and opportunity to develop their potential. This is also the best way to assesses their readiness in work later in life [14].

**Table 3. Result of the Paired Samples t-Test**

Competency Area	Pre-test	Post-test	t-Stat	P-Value
Bread and Pastry Production	1.03	3.50	15.358	1.06x10 <sup>-05</sup>
Housekeeping	1.51	3.66	42.527	6.78x10 <sup>-08</sup>

As observed, the students faced challenges in the simulated workplace. They struggled adjusting to their new environment, interacting with others, understanding instructions, and maintaining a positive attitude. However, with the assistance from special education teachers, supervisors and members of the family, students were able to perform the tasks and gain valuable experience at the end of the training. As highlighted in one study [13], having a "more knowledgeable other" such as skilled instructor, parent, teacher, or peer is crucial during the learning process. While students may initially struggle to perform tasks independently, they can accomplish them with guidance. Over time, this support should be gradually withdrawn as students gain proficiency and confidence.

Nevertheless, the students performed the tasks independently and were motivated to perform them again although there were instances when students struggled with their performances due to challenges in emotional regulation, attention, and resistance to perform. For these reasons, students need to improve their behavior and develop positive attitude in performing and completing the tasks. But the skills gained should be continuously practiced and applied in school and at the home to accomplish mastery and ensure sustainability. Thus, a skills enhancement program would be created for the continuous training in improving the students' transition skills in baking and pastry production and in housekeeping.

### **Skills Enhancement Program for Baking/Pastry and Housekeeping**

The results of the study emphasized the importance of conducting transition skills training through a modified program designed to enhance the skills of students with special needs, specifically in bread and pastry production and in housekeeping. It was envisioned that such program must not merely incorporate a set of activities, it should represent an educational equity initiative that includes a comprehensive curriculum and supportive policies tailored to the needs of students with special needs. It should be an enhancement program that prepares students for various vocational pathways by aligning with technical and pre-baccalaureate vocational programs. This ensures coherence between the curriculum and higher-level learning standards, maintaining quality and relevance.

In determining what skills enhancement program could be designed, the study urged a committee of special education teachers, general education teachers, home economics teachers, and the school head to develop a skills enhancement program based on the students' skills evaluation. The group utilized technical and pre-baccalaureate vocational programs as benchmarks to guarantee coherence, curriculum alignment with advanced learning, and quality. This initiative created a skills enhancement program that features hands-on, skills-based activities aimed at further developing students' competencies and fostering entrepreneurial aspirations.

The program consists of skill-specific exercises meant to advance students' understanding and proficiency in order to get them ready for jobs as entrepreneurs. It also helps students refine the skills they have gained to the point of proficiency in order to better equip them for any professional opportunity. Essentially, the program was designed to help students become functional, regardless of their disabilities, to improve their quality of life, and to empower them to be productive and engaged citizens.

## CONCLUSION

Assessing students' transition skills is crucial for identifying the specific abilities they need to develop and master in preparation for future employment. Through the pre-and post-assessments under a special transition training program, it was determined that a skills enhancement program was essential to help students achieve proficiency through a structured transition skills development approach. This program serves as a platform to prepare students for the workforce, providing them with opportunities to explore their potential. It aims not only to equip students with practical skills but also to create positive and meaningful experiences that prepare them for the world of work. Moreover, the success of the program depends significantly on the full support and involvement of parents in their children's performance. Parental engagement and collaborative arrangements were seen as vital components for the program's success as they reinforce the skills learned and encourage continuous development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Transition skills programs are designed to help students with disabilities become more functional, enjoy their daily lives, and empower them to be productive citizens. These programs are crucial for enabling students to improve and master skills tailored to their unique capabilities. Thus, schools that serve students with special needs should focus on enhancing their transition programs, particularly in skills assessment and development. Furthermore, they need to acknowledge that building collaboration among parents, school leaders, and teachers is essential to support the students' performance and well-being. They could organize training sessions on transition programs for school leaders, teachers, and companies to promote advocacy and future partnerships. Finally, regular evaluations should be conducted as part of the transition skills training to ensure effective monitoring and sustainability.

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# Community-Service Learning Models and Prospects of Integrating into University Curriculum In Viet Nam

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## ABSTRACT

Community Service Learning (CSL) has become a popular educational approach at many universities around the world and considered an effective way to promote links between schools and community. In Viet Nam, CSL has been widely deployed in the past few years as an effective, integrated experiential learning method, motivating students to strive to become better citizens. More importantly, accessing CSL projects has helped students consolidate the acquired knowledge, develop teamwork and problem-solving skills, contributing to developing life-long learning attributes for their future career in a global world. This paper analyses prospects of integrating CSL into university curriculum in Viet Nam, with a case study at University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang. With quantitative research method, using questionnaire to survey 85 students having attended CSL-integrated courses, and literature review, this paper indicated a number of benefits of CSL towards students' knowledge, skill and awareness development, and propose recommendations to a more effective implementation of the two CSL models in undergraduate training programs in Viet Nam.

**Keywords:** Community service learning, University curriculum, Viet Nam, Project-based learning, Social responsibility.

## 1. Introduction

Over the past two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the term “engaged universities” is widely used and the expectation for greater social engagement is highlighted (Benneworth, 2012) as higher education institutions (HEIs) shifted to institutions with community engagement programs (Furco & Norvell, 2019). In this sense, Community Service Learning (CSL) has gained increasing popularity as an educational approach at many universities to effectively promote university-community partnerships. This approach enables learners to explore and develop real life experiences in the community, helps them improve civic awareness and understandings of different communities, and develops soft skills through engagement in community activities.

At University of Foreign Language Studies (UFLS), The University of Danang (UD), CSL has been gradually deployed in the past few years as an effective, integrated experiential learning method, providing diverse learning opportunities and raising awareness of social responsibility. Besides, Da Nang is known as a locality with great tourism potential. However, the current tourist attraction efficiency at many cultural tourism destinations has declined sharply since the COVID-19, raising the need for comprehensive approaches to boost inbound tourism. Accordingly, integrating CSL in courses of English Interpreting as midterm projects at UFLS is among many ways to propose recommendations to enhance tourist attraction to well-known tourist destinations in Da Nang. From a theoretical perspective, these courses will bring about a variety of positive effects: arouse students' passion for learning and engaging with the community, increase civic awareness contributing to the development of life-long learning attributes for students' future success. More importantly, CSL-integrated courses will help accommodate actual needs of the community, *i.e.* to increase the number of tourists, and strengthen relationships between community and UFLS.

With quantitative research method, using questionnaire to survey 85 students having attended CSL-integrated courses at UFLS, and literature review, this paper aims to identify benefits of CSL towards students' knowledge, skill and awareness development as a basis to propose recommendations to a more effective implementation of CSL-integrated programs.

## **2. Literature review on Community service learning**

### **2.1. CSL at universities in the world**

In the world, CSL is variably defined and often referred to as civic engagement, experiential learning or community-based learning (Kud, 2008). All stakeholders directly involving in CSL such as community partners and employees are ever intensifying requirements for individuals capable of possessing transferable skills set such as communication, collaboration, organization and civic orientation towards certain matters. HEIs thus are required to innovate their learning curriculum, adapt to academic course to accommodate those growing demands (Furco & Norvell, 2019); (UNESCO, 2021). Myriads of universities around the world, in response, have integrated a relevant CSL component into their training programs, providing opportunities for students to get out of conventional classrooms and connect with the real world, facilitating engagement with communities and gain hands-on real-life experiences (Kud, 2008); (Elizabeth, et al., 2009). Besides, CSL has been emphasized due to its positive outcomes, including increases in self-esteem, personal efficacy, moral reasoning, prosocial values (Moely, et al., 2002); (Gershenson-Gates, 2012), and fostering empathy and critical thinking skills besides academic learning (Kearney, 2004).

The initial appearance of CSL was in the mid-1960s in the U.S. when higher education was expanded and students were engaged in anti-poverty work and social reform program. CSL in the U.S. later was regarded as an educational reform strategy with an emphasis on students' cognitive development (Lounsbury & Pollack, 2001), and was fostered when the Carnegie Foundation<sup>11</sup> formed an elective classification for HEIs to be recognized as community engaged institutions.

In Europe, the inception of CSL has begun since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and has no starting date for its invention in the contemporary era. The European Parliament (2008) encouraged volunteering in educational institutions at all levels to contribute to community development because the organization recognized volunteering as a driving force for the advancement of social and economic cohesion in Europe (European Parliament, 2008).

In Asia, different CSL models have been adapted to HEIs since the 1990s when Christian universities adopted service-learning programs as the main driving force. CSL since then has rapidly and successfully evolved with support from stakeholders such as charitable foundations, governments and community partners and become a key pedagogy among HEIs particularly. The establishment of *Service-learning Asia network* in 2002 marked a milestone for CSL in Asia (Nishimura & Yokote, 2020), and many universities began integrating CSL into curriculum, summer programs or overseas exchange programs (Ma, Chiu, & Wei, 2019).

### **2.2. CSL at universities in Viet Nam**

The 1986 Doi Moi economic reforms did not have obvious impacts on higher education in Viet Nam until 1993 when the government issued the Decree 90, committing Viet Nam to the restructuring of higher education system (World Bank, 2008). Universities in Viet Nam since then have received greater institutional autonomy and expanded both scale and scope to meet the market's demands. CSL concept in Viet Nam seemed to be perceived as community service or volunteerism as volunteering programs are fostered, notably Green Summer programs in which students are encouraged to engage with communities during their summertime. Nguyen et al (2023) criticized that CSL in Vietnamese HEIs over the past decades

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<sup>11</sup> See more about Carnegie Foundation at <https://nerche.org/>

mostly embedded in coursework, sometimes in the form of voluntary programs which are related to academic study (Nguyen, Milligan, & Sutherland, 2023).

A number of studies indicated that university graduates lack skills needed for their performance in the workplace (World Bank, 2008); (Truong, Laura, & Shaw, 2018). In response to these critiques, universities have integrated CSL into curriculum with a booming in academia through workshops, trainings, conferences nationwide. Nguyen, Milligan & Sutherland (2023) in their study identified four catalysts for the growth of CSL in Vietnamese HEIs, including employability, responsibility to the community, enhancing students' moral values, and lecturers and faculty administrators as bottom-up initiators. In comparison with practices implemented within Western and other Asian countries, CSL in Viet Nam has been applied flexibly to not only enrich students' experiences but also shorten the gaps in Vietnamese workforce.

### **3. Experiences in CSL model implementation in the world**

#### **3.1. CSL models**

Since 1990, the promotion of CSL has received substantial support from several Western governments. The first worldwide conference on CSL took place at Berkeley in October 2001. Since then, CSL initiatives have been implemented widely with different models. Yet, CSL approach is not fully understood because different nations have distinct educational backgrounds and philosophies.

HEIs have therefore explored and put into practice a wide range of learning models to benefit the society. CSL primarily consists of extracurricular type and professional practice types in terms of implementation; required courses and elective courses regarding curriculum; and volunteering models, general community models, and volunteering in terms of training goals and focus (Ellenbogen, 2017).

Among a number of models of CSL, Kerrissa Heffernan divided CSL into 6 fundamental categories: Pure service learning; Discipline-based service learning; Problem-based service learning; Capstone courses; Service internships; and Undergraduate Community-based action research (Heffernan, 2001a).

#### **3.2. Implementing CSL**

CSL has recently gained popularity and has been actively integrated at colleges all over the world at various levels.

Since its inception in early 2008, CSL initiative at Nam An, Chongqing City, China has followed the service internship model and shown great success. Elder care has been incorporated into the social work training program during the implementation process, guiding students to employ theoretical knowledge in practical work. In order to promote students' job skills, a comparable model has also been put into place at California State University, the USA since 1992 for students in different majors.

Yale Alumni Community Service Funded Internship; Community service program of the University of Colorado, University of Central Florida (USA), University of Alberta (Canada), Shanghai University (China) are a few examples of CSL models to enhance students' experiential learning (Tinkler, et al., 2014).

In short, it is clear that CSL is applied in various educational settings, and different fields of expertise have different organizational structures for implementation. Effective CSL will benefit students, instructors, universities, and communities. The reality has shown that if the following factors are taken into consideration, CSL application will be successful.

*Firstly*, three factors need to be considered, including: (i) Authenticity; (ii) Reflection; and (iii) Reciprocity.

*Secondly*, highlighting the significance of community and university connections. In the process of establishing partnerships, universities and communities must uphold certain values in principles of negotiating goals, tasks and outcomes; enhance mutual trust; show mutual respect and sincerity.



Universities and communities must also highlight their advantages, and jointly define roles, advance project realization, and achieve efficiency at the same time.

*Thirdly*, CSL is not a volunteer activity, but it should not be mandated as part of the graduation process either. Development of community, learner's awareness, occupational skills, and a sense of civic responsibility are all key outcomes of CSL activities. In this sense, it is impossible to separate institutional support provided by universities, enterprises, and implementation initiatives from the success of CSL.

### **3. Prospects of integrating CSL into undergraduate training curriculum in Viet Nam**

#### **3.1. Research methodology**

The purpose of this research is to explore benefits of CSL towards knowledge, skill and awareness development. The guiding question of this research is: *What are benefits of CSL towards knowledge, skill and awareness development of students?*

The quantitative research method, *i.e.* using questionnaire, was applied to conduct this study. The procedure was (1) adapting questionnaire; (2) distributing Google-form questionnaire to final-year students at Faculty of International Studies (FIS), and Faculty of English for Specific Purposes (FESP) having attended the CSL-integrated English Interpreting courses; (3) collecting data; and (4) analyzing data using descriptive statistics with SPSS v.25. The survey questions were adapted from two questionnaire by (Moely, et al., 2002) and (Kearney, 2004). Firstly, the Civic Attitudes and Skill Questionnaire (CASQ) developed by (Moely, et al., 2002) measured attitudes, skills and behavioural intentions related to service learning participation of 1486 undergraduate students from 56 liberal art courses based on their responses to the six-scales questions (*Civic actions; Interpersonal and problem-solving skills; Political awareness; Leadership skills; Social justice attitudes; and Diversity attitudes*). Secondly, questionnaire developed by (Kearney, 2004), assessing 127 students' perceptions of their knowledge and attitudinal changes before and after participating in a service learning course. The findings indicated that CSL contributes to the achievement of professional practice-based knowledge and such skills as critical thinking, communication, decision-making, and social awareness.

There are three sections in the adapted questionnaire. The first section briefly introduces CSL while the second one includes questions related to respondents' level of participation and benefits of CSL project to their development of knowledge, skills and awareness. The third section inquires information related to respondents' gender, class, level of English proficiency, years of learning English, and training major.

There were three CSL-integrated Interpreting courses, one was taught at FESP while the other two were at FIS with similar syllabi. About 35 students were enrolled in each course. Among 102 questionnaires distributed, there were 17 responses with many missing values that occurred randomly so the possibility of endogenous bias could be ruled out. As a result, only 85 responses were used as research samples.

#### **3.2. Research samples**

Participants to this research included 85 final-year students, 72 females, 10 males, and 3 preferring not to specify their gender, from FIS, and FESP. These students, 64 from FIS (75.3%) and 21 from FESP (24.7%), attended CSL-integrated English Interpreting courses from January to April 2024 at UFLS. Among them, 18 students (21.2%) never took any CSL-integrated courses before, 49 students (57.6%) attended 1-2 CSL-integrated courses, 14 students (16.5%) attended 3-4 CSL-integrated courses, and 4 students (4.7%) having attended over 5 CSL-integrated courses. Most of them have studied English more than 13 years (60%) and over half of them had English proficiency of intermediate level and above (53%).

In the Interpreting courses, CSL activities are integrated in the midterm project in which three factors were carefully considered: course content, project content and community's needs. Accordingly, enrolled students are required to pay visits to assigned tourist destinations in Da Nang to make a video in English to

introduce the destinations and their recommendations to enhance tourist attraction. To ensure all students understand their tasks thoroughly, course lecturers conducted an orientation session in the first week of the course and periodical consultation sessions during the semester.

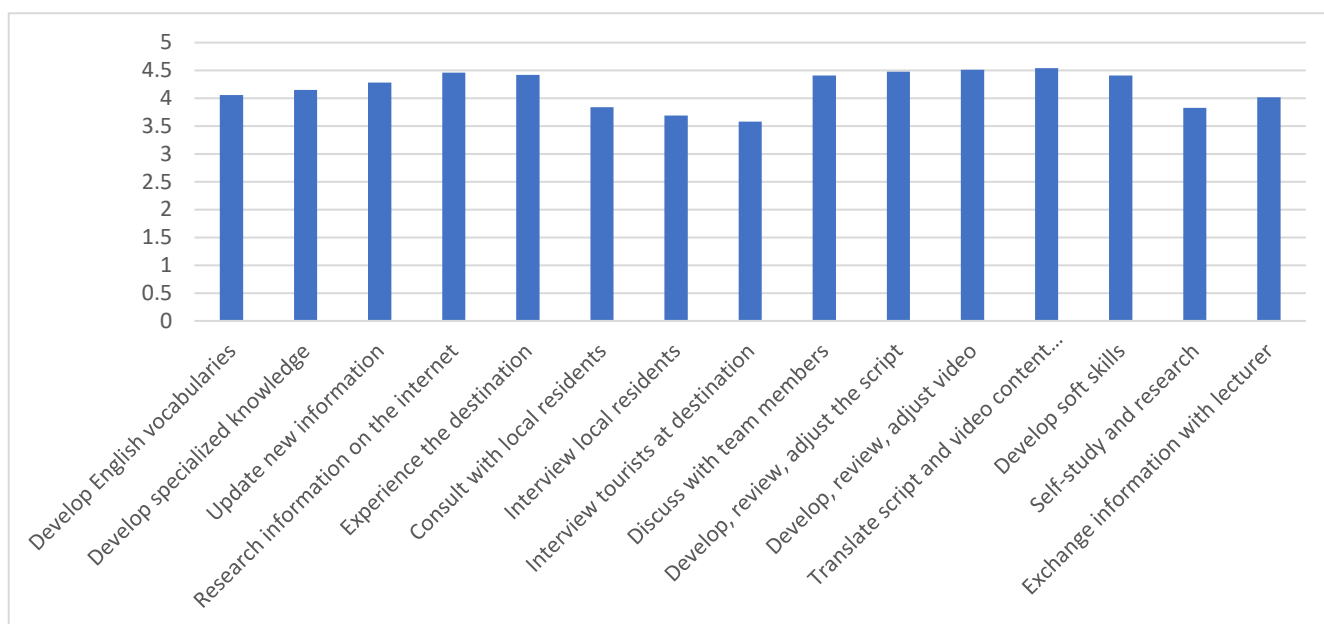
### 3.3. Findings and Discussion

To answer the research question, it is necessary to analyze the data collected to examine key results. In the first section, among 18 respondents who never attended any CSL-integrated courses before the Interpreting courses, 11 students (61%) understood CSL thoroughly while 7 students (39%) understood a bit after joining the orientation session and completing the midterm project. This means all students understand about CSL and what they have to do to benefit from CSL-integrated courses to develop their specialized knowledge, skills and awareness.

#### 3.3.1. Level of participation in CSL activities

Regarding students' frequencies of participation in activities to complete the course midterm project, students responded on a series of 5-point Likert scale questions from *Never* (1) to *Always* (5).

Fifteen activities were undertaken by students to complete the project which are categorized into 5 major groups: (1) Self-study (at UFLS library or on the internet); (2) Communication with local community (direct interview, consultation, discussion), with group members, and course lecturer; (3) Group work (develop script, translate script to English, shoot and edit video); (4) Knowledge development (English terminologies, history, culture, economics and society of destinations); (5) Skill development (Interpreting techniques, leadership, etc.) (see Figure 1). Among them, *Translate the script and video content from Vietnamese to English (and vice versa)* were undertaken the most frequently with 56 respondents (65.9%) replied at *Always* level (with Means equal 4.54 and 4.51 respectively). Fifty-five respondents (64.7%) always *Develop, review, and adjust the format and content of the video* (Mean = 4.51) and *Develop, review, and adjust the script* (Mean = 4.48). Followed closely by 52 respondents (61.2%) always *Research information about the destination on the internet* (Mean = 4.46), 51 respondents (60%) developed soft skills (communication, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking); 50 students (58.8%) paying frequent visits to the assigned destinations (Mean = 4.42). Yet, activities with the least frequency were *Interview tourists at the destination to find solutions for attracting visitors* (Mean = 3.58); *Interview local residents to identify challenges and difficulties of destination* (Mean = 3.69); *Self-study and research in the university library* (Mean = 3.83); *Consult with local residents* (Mean = 3.84); *Exchange information with course lecturers* (Mean = 4.02). These results are reasonable because this is the course of English Interpreting and the midterm project requires students to submit a video about their assigned destination so the activities they conducted the most frequently must be translation-interpreting, script and video making. Activities related to communication with the community (e.g. local residents, tourists) were done less frequently as a result.

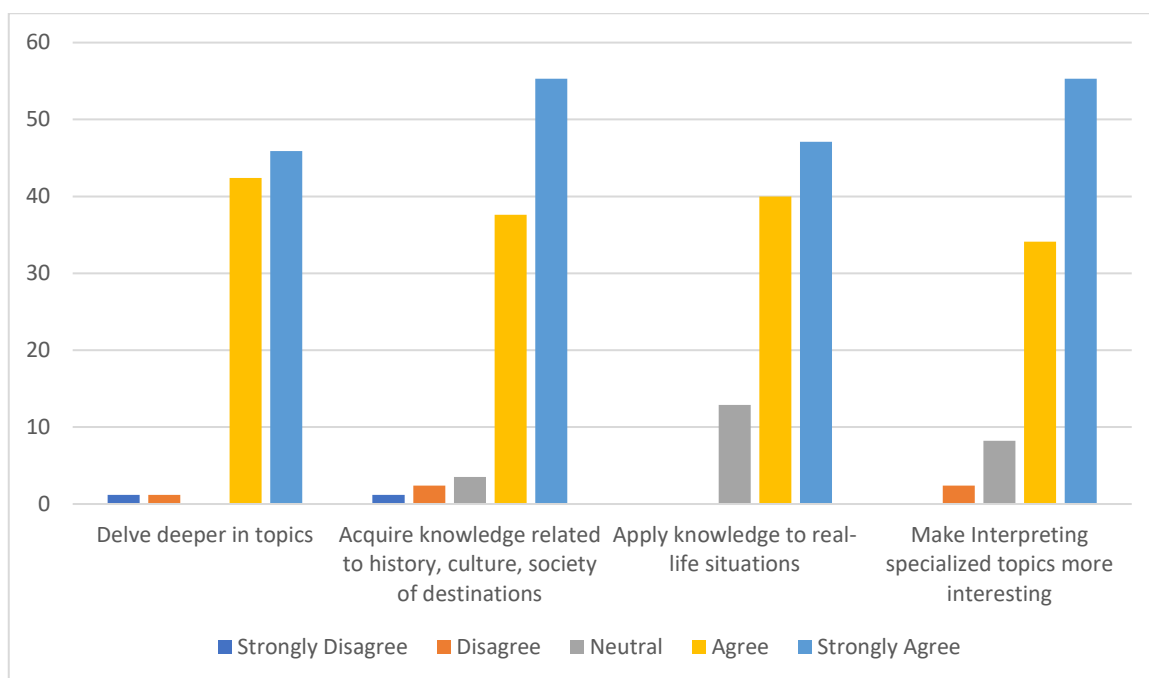


**Figure 4: Frequencies of students' participation in activities to complete CSL project**

### **3.3.2. Benefits of CSL project to students' knowledge development**

Regarding CSL impacts on knowledge development, participants responded on their perception of practical experience with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (5) *Strongly agree*. This measure, consisting of 4 items, was adapted from two related scales (Gershenson-Gates , 2012); and (Kearney, 2004).

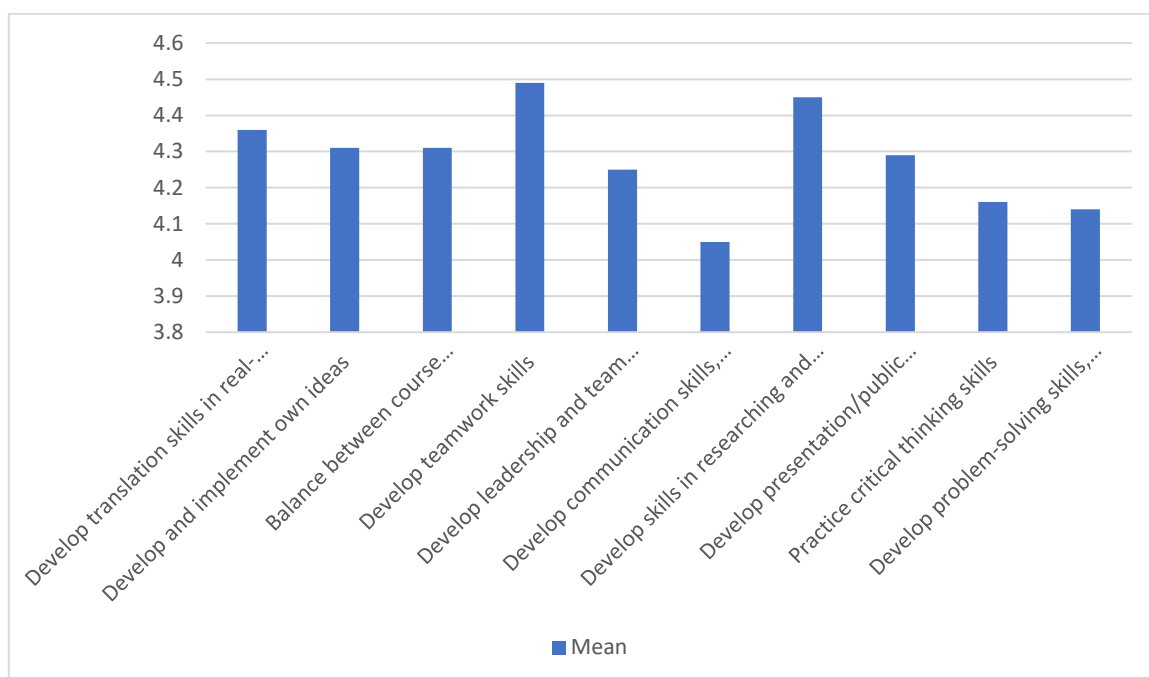
As can be seen in *Figure 2*, about 79 respondents (92.9%) agreed and strongly agreed that *CSL helped acquire knowledge about the culture, society, and history of the destination* (Mean = 4.44); meanwhile this figure for *CSL makes interpreting specialized topics more interesting* was 76 respondents (89.4%) (Mean = 4.42). The figures for “*CSL helped me delve deeper into the topics of the Midterm Project*” and “*I can apply the knowledge I have gained to real-world situations*” were 75 (88.3%) and 74 (87.1%) (Mean = 4.31 and 4.34) respectively. These findings are in line with those of (Salam et al., 2019) indicating that through practical experiences, students engaging in CSL can enhance understanding of course contents; (Scholtz, 2018) stating CSL allows students to apply theoretical concepts and knowledge acquired in the classroom setting to a practical environment, and (Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009) indicating CSL has positively influenced students' motivation to learn. In comparison with CSL, students in traditional learning settings may struggle to establish meaningful connections between their academic knowledge and its practical application resulting in a perception that their education lacks relevance to real-world issues, diminishing the overall value of their learning experience. Meanwhile, CSL provides them with higher expectations regarding the relevance and impact of their coursework on real-world applications (Printo & Costa-Ramalto, 2023). This further strengthens the research's findings on advantages of CSL to students' knowledge development.



**Figure 5: Benefits of CSL project to students' knowledge development**

### 3.3.3. Benefits of CSL project to students' skill development

Regarding CSL impacts on students' skill development, participants responded on their perception of practical experience with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (5) *Strongly agree*. This measure, consisting of 10 items, was adapted from two related scales (Kearney, 2004); (Moely, et al., 2002).



**Figure 6: Benefits of CSL project to students' skill development**

Among the 10 surveyed items about CSL impacts on students' skill development, *Develop teamwork skills* was ranked the first with 76 respondents (89.4%) agreed and strongly agreed (Mean = 4.49), followed closely by *developing information researching and synthesizing skills* (N = 75, accounted for 88.3%, with Mean = 4.45) (See Figure 3). There were 73 students (85.9%) indicating that CSL helps them develop

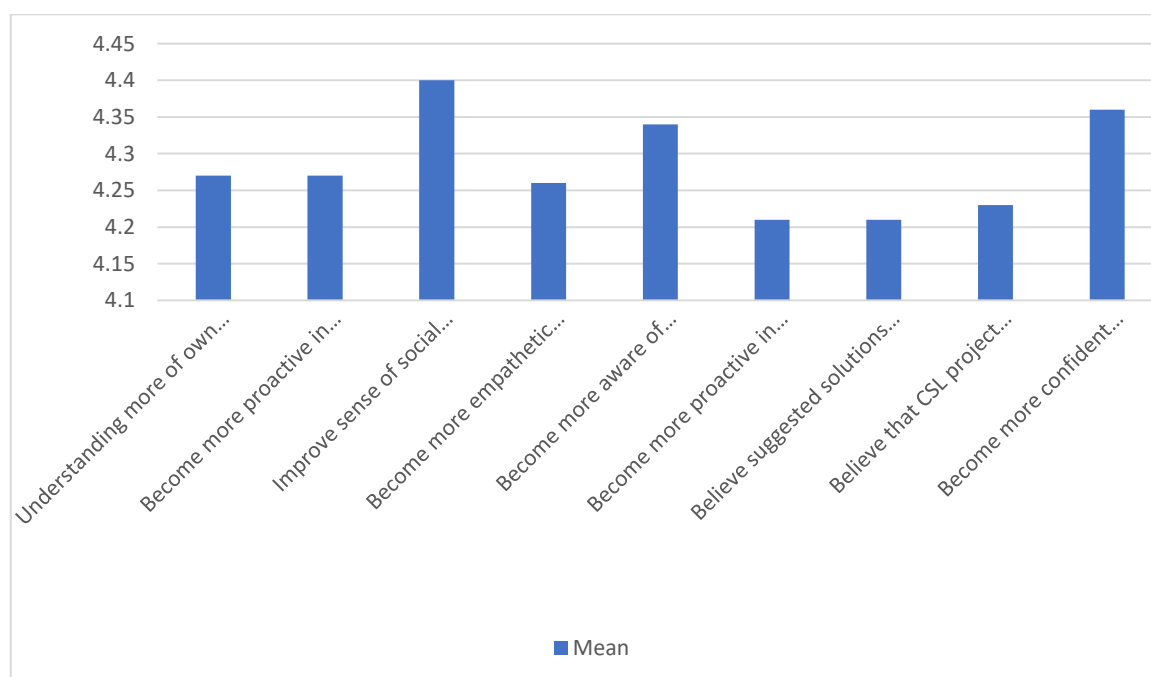
*interpreting skills in real-life situations*, and *idea development and implementation* (Mean = 4.36 and 4.31 respectively). More importantly, 74 respondents (87%) believed that they have learned *how to accommodate practical needs of the assigned destination and course requirements* (Mean = 4.31). Other skill development such as *presentation/ public speaking skills* (N = 71; 83.5%; Mean = 4.29); *leadership and team management skills* (N = 69; 81.2%; Mean = 4.25); *critical thinking skills* (N = 68; 80%; Mean = 4.16); *problem-solving skills*, particularly for real-world community issues (N = 66; 77.7%; Mean = 4.14) were also perceived positively.

With the Mean of only 4.05, *communication skills, especially with people from different economic backgrounds* was perceived the least developed by 61 students (71.7%). However, as two-thirds of the surveyed respondents (78.5%) never or having attended only 1-2 CSL-integrated courses, their perception of developing communication skills, especially with the locals might be challenging and need further practicing.

These results support findings from research papers of Truong & Huynh (2021), (Taylor & Raykov, 2014), and (Elizabeth, et al., 2009), which indicated that students participating in CSL acquired essential skills to effectively work with others, respond to complex real-world problems, and develop communication skills. Also, increased engagement in CSL projects leads to enhanced critical thinking among students as similarly identified in Printo & Costa-Ramvalho (2023)’s research. This study showed key differences between CSL and traditional learning-teaching context, stating that CSL brought students a greater development of pro-social behaviors, enabling students’ engagement with the communities, fostering skills such as critical thinking and adaptability, which are less emphasized in traditional settings (Printo & Costa-Ramalto, 2023).

### 3.3.4. Benefits of CSL project on students’ awareness improvement

Regarding CSL impacts on students’ awareness improvement, participants responded on their perception of practical experience with a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *Strongly disagree* to (5) *Strongly agree*. This measure, consisting of 9 items, was adapted from two related scales (Moely, et al., 2002); (Kearney, 2004). Overall, participants indicated that engaging in CSL projects help improve their proactiveness towards learning, and increase social responsibilities towards the community.



**Figure 7: Benefits of CSL project to students’ awareness improvement**

Among those 9 surveyed items, *improving students' sense of social responsibility* was ranked the first with 78 respondents (91.8%) agreed and strongly agreed (Mean = 4.40), followed closely by similar numbers of students (N = 75, accounted for 88%) indicated that CSL project helped *increase confidence in future work with the community* (Mean = 4.36), *awareness of difficulties faced by the local community* (Mean = 4.34) and *empathy towards issues faced by local people* (Mean = 4.26) (See Figure 4).

Regarding project products (*i.e.* video), 70 students (82.3%) believed that their group's project would *make a difference and contribute to promoting the local community* (Mean = 4.23); while 69 students (81.2%) believed their *solutions meet the needs of local community* (Mean = 4.21), and *become more proactive in seeking solutions to help develop the local community* (N = 65; 76.5%; Mean = 4.21).

More interestingly, students indicated that CSL projects helped them become more proactive in their learning activities (N = 76; 89.4%; Mean = 4.27) and improve self understandings of strengths and weaknesses (N = 71; 83.5%; Mean = 4.27).

These results are in line with research findings by (Elizabeth, et al., 2009) and (Nishimura & Yokote, 2020), indicating CSL projects encourage students to become more responsible citizens, contributing to personal growth and increasing self-awareness; (Truong & Huynh, 2021), stating CSL also strengthens students' commitment, boosts their sense of social responsibility and citizenships skills.

## **4. Recommendations and Limitations**

### **4.1. Recommendations**

The above findings, indicating that CSL benefits students' development of knowledge, skill and awareness, address the above guiding research question. Overall, participants responded that CSL increased their applied specialized interpreting knowledge, and knowledge about culture, society, and history of the community, contributing to enhancing their learning motivation. In terms of skill development, CSL project strengthened participants' skills of teamwork, information searching and synthesizing, leadership, critical thinking, public speaking, and interpreting techniques. Regarding awareness, CSL project improved participants' personal and civic awareness, and enhanced self-efficacy. Engaging in CSL also made students become more empathetic towards real-life problems faced by local community, thereby nurturing their compassion for future community work. This study supports the integration of CSL approach into undergraduate curriculum and pedagogical practices to better equip students with necessary knowledge, skills and awareness to join the labor workforce of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

However, there is much discussion highlighting challenges of conducting CSL-integrated courses. Among those frequently listed, students often got struggled communicating with community and finding connections of CSL to learning (Brown, 2015). The former is in line with this study findings when surveyed students' communication skills with local residents were perceived the least developed skills.

In reverse, community partners found that there is misalignment between partners' and students' goals beside skillset needed to be matched. One of the most predominant forms of CSL applied in HEIs today is the integration of CSL component into a regular course, which requires only a semester or a few hours a week during that time (Elizabeth, et al., 2009). Therefore, CSL experiences are mostly short-term, leading to difficulties for community partners to fully benefit from students' CSL experiences. For instructors, it is such an obstacle for them to find the match between students and community partners and develop the curriculum to close such gaps (Brown, 2015).

Within Vietnamese context, CSL practitioners face two major challenges: furthering a distinctive Vietnamese approach and garnering institutional support. While the former raises a question about how to contextualize CSL, the latter shows the need for top-down institutional support. Volunteering programs or political courses have been in long existence and well-supported from the top-down, CSL in contrast has

yet been positioned firmly within the curriculum (Nguyen, Milligan, & Sutherland, 2023). Additionally, feasibility and sustainability of CSL should be carefully considered because this pedagogy seems to solely receive much emphasis at its initial phase (Truong and Huynh, 2021). In this sense, a selection of appropriate CSL models should be made prior to curriculum development and revision to enhance implementation consistency and efficiency. From the above literature review and Vietnamese context, we suggest the models of (Heffernan, 2001a) *Discipline-based service learning* and *Problem-based service learning* should be applied in universities in Viet Nam. As the former model requires students' participation in a CSL project for the whole semester, lecturers can observe, support, and evaluate their engagement with the community more comprehensively, the latter provides meaningful experiences when students can apply acquired theoretical knowledge into solving a real-life problem to support community well-being.

Additionally, when it comes to potential barriers to implementing CSL into undergraduate curriculum, Heffernan (2001b) indicated three greatest challenges to integrating service into coursework, which are time and pressures of teaching load, resistance from faculty (and discipline), and lack of support for faculty at the institutional level. Additionally, students play a crucial role in driving CSL initiatives and engaging with the community to address problems. However, faculty and students may face difficulties in collaboration due to dissimilar perspectives on issues that need addressing (Yusof, et al., 2020). These are also challenges that UFLS is facing upon CSL implementation. CSL has only been applied in a few courses for one semester per course and has not yet been implemented consistently and uniformly at both faculty and institutional levels.

#### **4.2. Limitations**

Despite the findings answering the guiding research question, there are some limitations to this study. Firstly, research samples were small with only 85 valid questionnaire responses. Future researchers may find it more reliable on a much larger sample size. Also, given the subject matter of Interpreting, generalizability of the findings must be considered when applying CSL-integrated projects into the curriculum as the given project was closely connected to suggested topics of the discipline. Future researchers may improve the findings by tailoring the project content to better accommodate the community needs and interdisciplinary course requirements.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The research findings suggest that CSL-integrated courses develop students' knowledge, skills and awareness. Participating in the CSL project also diversifies students' real-life experiences, enriches knowledge of societal issues, improves social skills, and develops a stronger bond with community work. It is thus recommended that CSL approach should be widely integrated into undergraduate curriculum in Viet Nam to optimize benefits to students, faculty and the community. In terms of CSL models, the (Heffernan, 2001a) models of *Discipline-based service learning* and *Problem-based service learning* should be considered to be applied in universities in Viet Nam to enhance implementation effectiveness.

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# The Impact of Servant Leadership on School's Organizational Performance

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## ABSTRACT

This research is a cross-sectional study of servant leadership practices in three Divine Word Colleges of the Society of the Divine Word, Philippine Central Province, in the school year 2020-2021. It determined the impact of servant leadership practices on the organizational performance of the schools. The analysis centered on: 1) how the servant leadership practices in the schools manifested valuing, developing and building people, displaying authenticity, and providing and sharing leadership; 2) how the organizational performance of the schools are measured in terms of overall management, finance, linkages, and delivery of programs and services; 3) the impact of the leadership practices on the organizational performance of the schools; and 4) the implications drawn from the findings of the study. Data gathered from a sample of 671 school personnel from the three colleges negated the hypothesis that servant leadership practices do not affect the organizational performance of the schools. The result showed servant leadership practices are manifest in the environment of the three Divine Word Colleges in the Philippine Central Province and the performance of the schools are correlated with the servant leadership practices of the administrators on valuing people, developing people, building people, displaying authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership are significant predictors of organizational performance, negating the null hypothesis that servant leadership practices do not significantly affect organizational performance.

**Keywords:** servant leadership, organizational performance, linear relationship, society of the divine word

## Introduction

Servant Leadership is not about position, status and controlling people but rather an opportunity to serve others along with the shared objectives of the organization. When the theory is correctly understood and applied, it changes lives organization and communities, for the better (Hannigan, 2008).

Laub's servant leadership model is a leadership of serving the needs of those led and of the organization over the self-interest of the leader. It is a principled approach where leaders prioritize the well-being and success of their followers, including employees, customers, and other key stakeholders, over their own personal interests (Canavesi & Minelli, 2021). Lao-Tzu's idea of a leader is one who serves the needs of others first, strengthening their abilities and giving credit to others.

Extant literature on the impact of servant leadership on organizational performance presents opposing and inconsistent conclusions. Savage-Austin & Honeycutt (2011) suggests that, "the practice of servant leadership profoundly affects the nature of the organization." On the other hand, Waal & Sivo (2012) pointed out that there is no unambiguous evidence that servant leadership factors have a direct positive influence on the performance of the organization but directly influence the high performance organizational factor. Lisbijanto & Budiyo (2014) present the idea that servant leadership has a positive significant impact on job satisfaction but has no direct influence on organizational performance.

Educational institutions are considered as the best venue to model servant leadership for 'all schools are institutions of service' (Greenleaf, 1977). Rahayani (2010) mentioned that educational institutions are expected to bring about social change and social justice in society. Canavesi & Minelli (2021) pointed out

that servant leadership is a relevant leadership model that influences the quality of service orientation of school managers and administrator. According to Maxwell (2024) leadership is influence.

This study examined the servant leadership practices in educational institutions and establish their relationship with the organizational performance, particularly the impact of these servant leadership practices on the organizational performance of the Divine Word Colleges, SVD Philippines Central Province. Specifically, answers to these queries were sought: 1.) what servant leadership practices were manifested in the three Divine Word Colleges of the Philippine Central Province that value, develop, and build people; that were authentic; and that provide and share leadership? 2) what were the measures of the organizational performance in terms of a) over-all management, b) finance, c) delivery of programs and services; and linkages?; and 3) what is the impact of servant leadership practices on the organizational performance of the schools.

### **Hypothesis:**

Servant leadership practices significantly affect the organizational performance of the schools. Transformed into null, the study hypothesized that no impact is exerted by servant leadership practices on organizational performance.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study is anchored on Servant Organizational Leadership Model of James Alan Laub (1999). Laub's Servant Organizational Leadership is premised on the belief that leaders serve others to build them up to attain their full potential and that of the organization – i.e. the leadership and workforce. A servant leader is one who values people, develops people, builds community, displays authenticity, provides leadership, and shares leadership. The goal of the researcher is to establish the mutual relationship of servant leadership and its impact on school's organizational performance in the aspects of overall management, finance, linkages and delivery of programs and services.

### **Methods**

This study applied a descriptive-correlational design to determine the impact of servant leadership practices of educational administrators and leaders on the school organizational performance. A cross-sectional survey was employed to gather the data requirements. Cross-sectional survey was employed collecting data through Google form from a total of 671 respondents consisting of SVD administrators, faculty and students. The details of the sampling units are reflected in Table 1.

### **Instrument of the Study**

This research utilized a research instrument on servant leadership consisting of 75 items with structured five-point Likert-type scoring scale. The first three sections of the questionnaire were adapted verbatim from James Laub's (1999) Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA). The SOLA instrument had an estimated reliability coefficient of .98. One way ANOVA and correlation tests were run with demographic data and the SOLA score and with the job satisfaction score. A significant ( $p < .01$ ) positive correlation of .653 was found between the SOLA score and the job satisfaction score. The SOLA was taken to be a reliable tool for measuring servant leadership in organizations and useful for further research as well as diagnosis in organizations, thus was partially adopted in this study. The fourth section of the instrument was adapted from Weiwei Lin's self-constructed survey questionnaire for Nonprofit Revenue Diversification and Organizational Performance (2010). It consists of nine (9) statements about organization performance which were modified by the researcher to suit the purpose of the study.

## Respondents of the Study

Table 1: *Respondents of the Study*

<i>School</i>	<i>Respondents</i>		
	SVD Administrators	Faculty	Staff
School A	7	167	92
School B	6	159	113
School C	7	61	59
Total	20	387	264
TOTAL			<b>671</b>

## Procedure

The researcher obtained permission from the school presidents and the Provincial Superior. A survey link was sent to the school presidents, department chairs or other authorized personnel, and was distributed by random sampling. The researchers used Google Forms to collect the data, which were automatically recorded and collated in the system. Institutional clearances and permission from the LCUP Graduate Studies Department and the three Divine Word Colleges in Calapan, Legaspi, and San Jose was also secured by the researcher for ethical considerations.

## Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

The collected data were tabulated using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). The impact of the servant leadership practices on the organizational performance of the school was statistically explored using the correlation and regression analysis. The servant leadership practices and organizational performance impact are quantified using the scale in Table 2.

Table 2: Servant Leadership Rating Scale

Rating Scale	Range	Descriptive Evaluation
5	4.50-5.00	Strongly Agree
4	3.50-4.49	Agree
3	2.50-3.49	Undecided
2	1.50-2.49	Disagree
1	1.00-1.49	Strongly Disagree

## Results and Discussions

### Servant Leadership Practices in SVD Schools

The servant leadership practices were assessed along the following categories: valuing, developing and building people, displaying authenticity, and providing and sharing leadership.

***Servant Leadership Values People.*** Table 3 shows that the servant leadership practices in terms of valuing people got a 4.28 mean score which means that the respondents agreed with the indicators suggesting that they observe such in the leadership of their school. This was shown by the ability of the teachers to trust each other (4.15), to be clear on the key goals of the school (4.39), to be non-judgmental and open minded (3.98), respect each other (4.33), know where their school is headed in the future (4.20), maintain high ethical standards (4.36), work well together in teams (4.25), value differences in culture, race and ethnicity (4.43), caring and compassionate towards each other (4.34), demonstrate high integrity & honesty (4.33), and trustworthy (4.32).

The servant leader values his people by believing in them, putting others first and by listening. He has respect for others; believes in the unlimited potential of each person; accepts people as they are; trusts others; and is perceptive concerning the needs of others, putting their needs ahead of his own; Moreover,

he shows appreciation of others; love and compassion toward others, and is a receptive listener. Along the five-point scale where ‘5.00’ is the highest and ‘1.00’ is the lowest, the respondents “agreed” that these leadership traits are manifest in their school leadership with an general weighted mean (GWM) of 4.28. There appears to be quite a need for the leaders to “be non-judgmental and open-minded,” (GWM = 3.98).

Table 3: *Servant Leadership Practices in terms of Valuing People*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Trust each other	4.15	Agree
Are clear on the key goals of the school	4.39	Agree
Are non-judgmental and open-minded	3.98	Agree
Respect each other	4.33	Agree
Know where this school is headed in the future	4.20	Agree
Maintain high ethical standards	4.36	Agree
Work well together in teams	4.25	Agree
Value differences in culture, race and ethnicity	4.43	Agree
Are caring and compassionate towards each other	4.34	Agree
Demonstrate high integrity & honesty	4.33	Agree
Are trustworthy	4.32	Agree
Average	4.28	Agree

***Servant Leadership Develops People.*** Table 4 shows that the respondents “agreed” (GWM = 4.19) in general with all the indicators of “developing people.” Specifically, the respondents have been able to relate well to each other (4.17); attempt to work with others more than working on their own (4.06); are held accountable for reaching work goals (4.24); are aware of the needs of others (4.18); allow for individuality of style and expression (4.16); consult in the decision making process (4.04); work to maintain positive working relationships (4.32); accept people as they are (4.31); view conflict as an opportunity to learn & grow (4.15); know how to get along with people (4.25); and communicate a clear vision of the future of the school (4.25).

The respondents seemed to observe though that the servant leaders fall a bit short in “consulting them in the decision-making process (GWM = 4.04) and in “attempting to work with others more than working on their own,” (GWM =4.06).

Table 4: *Servant Leadership Practices in terms of Developing People*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Relate well to each other	4.17	Agree
Attempt to work with others more than working on their own	4.06	Agree
Are held accountable for reaching work goals	4.24	Agree
Are aware of the needs of others	4.18	Agree
Allow for individuality of style and expression	4.16	Agree
Are consulted in the decision-making process	4.04	Agree
Work to maintain positive working relationships	4.32	Agree
Accept people as they are	4.31	Agree
View conflict as an opportunity to learn & grow	4.15	Agree
Know how to get along with people	4.25	Agree
Communicate a clear vision of the future of the school	4.25	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The servant leader develops his people by providing learning and growth, and by modelling and encouraging them. He uses his power and authority to benefit others. He provides mentor relationships help people grow professionally. He views conflict as an opportunity to learn and grow. He leads by example by modeling appropriate behavior. He models a balance of life and work and encourages others to do so.

He builds people up through encouragement and affirmation. On this set of indicators, the respondents “agreed” that their leaders manifest this trait (GWM = 4.19).

***Servant Leadership Builds People.*** Table 5 shows the respondents’ agreement with the indicators of servant leadership in terms of building people, with a GWM of 4.19. Their perception of this aspect of servant leadership was presumably drawn from their experiences in their respective schools – i.e. open to learning from those who are below them in the organization (4.25); their administrators allow teachers/staff to help determine where this school is headed (4.24); they work in collaboration with teachers/staff, not separate from them (4.16); use of persuasion to influence others instead of coercion or force (4.15); not hesitate to provide the leadership that is needed (4.23); promote open communication and sharing of information (4.30); empower teachers/staff to make important decisions (4.17); provide the support and resources needed to help teachers/staff meet their professional goals (4.29); create an environment that encourages learning (4.34); open to receiving criticism and challenge from others (4.06); and say what they mean, and mean what they say (4.02).

Table 5: *Servant Leadership Practices in terms of Builds People*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Open to learning from those who are below them in the organization	4.25	Agree
Allow teachers/staff to help determine where this school is headed	4.24	Agree
Work in collaboration with teachers/staff, not separate from them	4.16	Agree
Use persuasion to influence others instead of coercion or force	4.15	Agree
Don’t hesitate to provide the leadership that is needed	4.23	Agree
Promote open communication and sharing of information	4.30	Agree
Empower teachers/staff to make important decisions	4.17	Agree
Provide the support and resources needed to help teachers/staff meet their professional goals	4.29	Agree
Create an environment that encourages learning	4.34	Agree
Open to receiving criticism and challenge from others	4.06	Agree
Say what they mean, and mean what they say	4.02	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The respondents obviously observe their leaders to be manifesting the traits needed to build people, although they were a bit low in their agreement that their leaders “say what they mean, and mean what they say,” (GWM = 4.02) and are “open to receiving criticism and challenge from others” (GWM = 4.06). Overall, their agreement with the indicators averaged 4.20.

***Servant Leadership Displays Authenticity.*** Table 6 reveals the respondents’ agreement with the indicators on display of authenticity by their schools’ leadership which got a general weighted mean of 4.09. The respondents “agreed” that their school leaders manifest an ability to: encourage each person to exercise leadership (4.21); admit personal limitations and mistakes (4.03); encourage people to take risks even if they may fail (3.95); practice the same behavior they expect from others (3.99); facilitate the building of community and team collaboration (4.25); do not demand special recognition for being leaders (4.09); lead by example by modelling appropriate behavior (4.16); seek to influence others from a positive relationship rather than from the authority of their position (4.14); provide opportunities for all teachers/staff to develop to their full potential (4.25); honestly evaluate themselves before seeking to evaluate others (3.92); and use their power and authority to benefit the teachers/staff (3.96).

Table 6: *Servant Leadership Displays Authenticity*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Encourage each person to exercise leadership	4.21	Agree
Admit personal limitations and mistakes	4.03	Agree
Encourage people to take risks even if they may fail	3.95	Agree
Practice the same behavior they expect from others	3.99	Agree

Facilitate the building of community & team collaboration	4.25	Agree
Do not demand special recognition for being leaders	4.09	Agree
Lead by example by modelling appropriate behavior	4.16	Agree
Seek to influence others from a positive relationship rather than from the authority of their position	4.14	Agree
Provide opportunities for all teachers/staff to develop to their full potential	4.25	Agree
Honestly evaluate themselves before seeking to evaluate others	3.92	Agree
Use their power and authority to benefit the teachers/staff	3.96	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.09</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The servant leader displays authenticity by being open to being known (willing to be transparent), being learners (being self-aware, open to input from others) and maintaining integrity (honest, consistent, and ethical behavior). He admits personal limitations and mistakes; promotes open communication and sharing of information; accountable and responsible to others. He is non-judgmental – keeping an open mind, open to learning from others, and flexible – willing to compromise; evaluates himself before blaming others; is open to receiving criticism and challenge from others; is trustworthy; demonstrates high integrity and honesty; and maintains high ethical standards.

Although the respondents “agreed” with all the indicators, they seemed to perceive that their leaders need to “honestly evaluate themselves before seeking to evaluate others” (3.92); “Encourage people to take risks even if they may fail,” (3.95); “Use their power and authority to benefit the teachers/staff” (3.96).

***Servant Leadership Provides Leadership.*** Data in Table 7 show that the servant leadership in terms of providing leadership got a 4.20 mean percentage score which means that the respondents agreed with the indicators of servant leadership in terms of providing leadership, manifested through the administrators’ initiative to: take appropriate action when needed (4.24); build people up through encouragement and affirmation (4.26); encourage teachers/staff to work together rather than compete against each other (4.37); be humble by not promoting themselves (4.16); communicate clear plans and goals for the school (4.25); provide mentor relationships in order to help people grow professionally (4.20); be accountable and responsible to others (4.20); be receptive listeners (4.10); not seek after special status or the “perks” of leadership (4.10); put the needs of the teachers/staff ahead of their own (4.09); and feel appreciated for what one contributes (4.28); and practice the same behavior they expect from others (3.99).

The servant leader provides leadership by envisioning the future (intuition as to direction for the organization), by taking initiative (moving out ahead) and by clarifying goals (understanding what it takes to get to the vision). He has a vision of the future; uses intuition and foresight to see the unforeseeable; provides hope to others; encourages risk-taking; and exhibits courage. Further, he has healthy self-esteem; initiates action by moving out ahead; is competent having the knowledge and skills to get things done. Furthermore, he is clear on goals and good at pointing the direction and is able to turn negatives into positives or the threats to opportunities.

Table 7: *Servant Leadership Practices in terms of Providing Leadership*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
Take appropriate action when it is needed	4.24	Agree
Build people up through encouragement and affirmation	4.26	Agree
Encourage teachers/staff to work together rather than competing against each other	4.37	Agree
Are humble – they do not promote themselves	4.16	Agree
Communicate clear plans and goals for the school	4.25	Agree
Provide mentor relationships so as to help people grow professionally	4.20	Agree
Are accountable and responsible to others	4.20	Agree

Are receptive listeners	4.10	Agree
Do not seek after special status or the “perks” of leadership	4.10	Agree
Put the needs of the teachers/staff ahead of their own	4.09	Agree
Feel appreciated by superior for what one contributes	4.28	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>Agree</b>

***Servant Leadership Shares Leadership.*** The data in Table 8 show the participants’ assessment of their leaders in terms of their practice of sharing leadership which got a weighted mean average of 4.36. This means that the respondents saw in their leaders the practices relevant to sharing leadership. The respondents perceived, hence agreed that their administrators see them as working at a high level of productivity (4.23); that they are listened to by their superiors in the school (4.28); they feel good about their contribution to the school (4.43); and receive encouragement and affirmation from their superior in the school (4.22).

The sharing of leadership is also manifest in the participants’ feeling that their job is important to the success of the school (4.53); their trust in the leadership of their respective schools (4.46); their enjoyment in working in their school (4.42); by the respect they get from their superior (4.34); and by being able to exercise their creativity in their job (4.45); Moreover, the participants agreed that in their school, a person’s work is valued more than one’s title (4.19); and that they are able to use their best gifts and abilities in their job (4.43).

Table 8: *Servant Leadership Practices in terms of Shares Leadership*

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
I am working at a high level of productivity	4.23	Agree
I am listened to by those above me in the school	4.28	Agree
I feel good about my contribution to the school	4.43	Agree
I receive encouragement and affirmation from those above me in the school	4.22	Agree
My job is important to the success of this school	4.53	Strongly Agree
I trust the leadership of this school	4.46	Agree
I enjoy working in this school	4.42	Agree
I am respected by those above me in the school	4.34	Agree
I am able to be creative in my job	4.45	Agree
In this school, a person’s work is valued more than their title	4.19	Agree
I am able to use my best gifts and abilities in my job	4.43	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.36</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The servant leader shares leadership by sharing power (empowering others), and sharing status (issues of position, honor, and self-promotion). He or she is low in control of others. Rather, he or she uses persuasion to influence others instead of coercion. He or she is humble by not promoting himself or herself. Further, he or she leads from personal influence rather than positional authority. He or she does not demand or expect honor and awe for being the leader. Lastly, he or she does not seek after special status or perks of leadership.

### **Organizational Performance**

Organization is servant according to Greenleaf (1977). This is his vision of any institution, that is, to be a servant in order to achieve high performance as an organization. This concept was also articulated by “*an organization becomes people building and people are first, consequently, right actions to achieve distinguished excellence happen quickly*” (Tanno & David, 2018). The organizational performance of the three Divine Word colleges were assessed in terms of their over-all management, finance, linkages, and delivery of programs and services.



### Organizational Performance in terms of over-all management.

Table 9 reflects that assessment of the participants of the over-all management as indicator of the organizational performance of the three Divine Word Colleges covered by the study. The general weighted mean of 4.25 indicates that the participants perceived the organizational performance as good. In particular, they perceived their respective schools as “well managed” (4.21); and that they each have a “well defined organizational structure” (4.28).

Table 9: *Organizational Performance in terms of Over-all Management, Finance, Delivery of Programs and Services, and Linkages*

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
▪ <b>Overall Management</b>		
My organization is well managed	4.21	Agree
My organization has well defined organizational structure	4.28	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.25</b>	<b>Agree</b>
▪ <b>Finance</b>		
My organization is effective in delivering finance quality programs and services	4.28	Agree
My organization has been doing a good job at evaluating finance program outcome	4.21	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.25</b>	<b>Agree</b>
▪ <b>Delivery of Programs and Services</b>		
My organization has management information system	4.27	Agree
My organization has quality assurance office	4.38	Agree
My organization is developing servant leadership	4.36	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.34</b>	<b>Agree</b>
▪ <b>Linkages</b>		
My organization is developing local linkages	4.28	Agree
My organization is developing international linkages	3.92	Agree
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>Agree</b>

**Organizational Performance in terms of Finance.** Table 10 shows that in terms of finance, the participants agreed that their respective organization had been effective in delivering quality finance programs and services (4.28), and had been doing a good job at evaluating finance program outcome (4.21), yielding a general weighted average of 4.25.

**Organizational Performance in terms of Delivery of Programs and Services.** As for the delivery of programs and services, the participants gave the organizational performance a general weighted mean of 4.34, the highest of all measures used in assessing the organizational performance. This owes to the observations that the Divine Word Colleges have management information system (4.27; quality assurance office; and are developing servant leadership (4.36).

**Organizational Performance in terms of Linkages.** As shown in Table 11, the organizational performance in terms of forging linkages got a general weighted means of 4.34. Specifically, the participants agreed that their organizations have in place management information system (4.27) and quality assurance office (4.38). Moreover, they agreed that their organizations are developing servant leadership (4.36).

Of the four measures of organizational performance, it appeared that more efforts have to be exerted by the three Divine Word Colleges in establishing linkages, particularly, international linkages (3.92), the lowest general weighted average of all the indicators.

## Impact of Servant Leadership Practices on Organizational Performance

To determine the impact of servant leadership on organizational performance, multiple correlation and regression analysis were utilized and the results are summarized and reflected in Table 13.

Table 10: *Regression Analysis of Servant Leadership Practices on Organizational Performance*

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	0.555	0.218		2.552	0.012
Valuing People	0.133	0.083	0.137	1.596	0.112
Developing People	0.124	0.097	0.126	1.275	0.204
Building People	0.071	0.094	0.079	0.756	0.451
Displaying Authenticity	0.050	0.104	0.058	0.482	0.630
Providing Leadership	0.291	0.105	0.335	2.767	0.006
Sharing Leadership	0.294	0.080	0.281	3.681	0

$R = .808$ ;  $r^2 = .654$ ,  $F = 53.466$ ,  $p < .001$

As can be gleaned from the results, the Beta coefficient are: 0.133 for valuing people, 0.124 for developing people, 0.071 for building people, 0.050 for displaying authenticity, 0.291 for providing leadership and 0.294 for sharing leadership. Only the variables “providing leadership and sharing leadership” as servant leadership practices contribute significant effect on organizational performance.

The R value of .808 denotes multiple correlation coefficient between the different variables as a predictor of the dependent variables, organizational performance, while the  $r^2$  value of .654 is the statistical measure on closeness of the data in the regression line as the coefficient of determination or simply the coefficient of multiple determination for multiple regression. This implies that 65.4 % of the variation in servant leadership is accounted for by changes in organizational performance.

Further analysis of the data in Table 10 reveals that the servant leadership practices on valuing people, developing people, building people, displaying authenticity, providing leadership, and sharing leadership are significant predictors of organizational performance,  $F (53.466)$ ,  $p < .001$  negating the null hypothesis that servant leadership practices do not significantly affect organizational performance.

## Management Implications Drawn from the Findings of the Study

The following are some significant management implications drawn from the findings of the study: 1) School administrators are challenged to displaying authenticity by more by admitting one’s mistakes and personal limitations as individuals, thus making the relationship between the school administrators and teachers more transparent causing a very smooth-sailing in the organization; 2) School administrators are also challenged to tap their teachers especially developing appropriate programs and services to the satisfaction of the learners. Hence, this may call for the teachers involvement in the conduct of planning and decision-making for better programs and services outcomes; 3) School administrators need clarify the roles and requirements from leaders to followers as well as the sharing of leadership, thus resulting in upscaling the performance of the organization. Finally, it may well be said that servant leadership’s effectiveness would directly translate to greater accomplishments of organizational goals and objectives. In this vein, enhancing the school administrators’ competencies in ‘leading while serving’ can pave the way towards the accomplishment of the vision-mission statement of the school through effectively strategizing on how to get there.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: 1) the servant leadership practices of the school administrators were generally high. The higher level of assessment was noted on sharing leadership, and valuing people; 2) organizational performance was manifested also at the high level in terms of over-all management, finance, linkages, and delivery of programs and services - indicative of the schools administrators' capability to practice good servant leadership and governance; 3) servant leadership practices have significant impact on organizational performance; 4) significant management implications that were drawn from the findings of the study include: the need for the school administrators to display authenticity; to expand local and international linkages, and to enhance school administrators' competencies in 'leading and serving' at the same time.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered: 1) school administrators should continue to enhance their servant leadership practices. Further enhancement on the displaying authenticity at work and transparency towards others are recommended. This may be actualized by conducting seminars and training among school administrators regarding the matter; 2) the organizations may exert more efforts in the delivery of their programs and services, examples of which are the acquisitions of Learning Management System (LMS) to better serve the students. They may also evaluate their programs in order for them to gauge the satisfaction of their students and eventually improve them during planning of program services; 3) school administrators are challenged to further hone and advance their servant leadership abilities according to the needs of the organization and their teacher-subordinates especially in their longing for a leader who is also a servant. Hence, they may include in their strategic plan the recollection and/or series of retreat about servant leadership, seminar-workshop on futures thinking, and series of talks about managerial decision-making and shared leadership in order for them to renew their call for mission to serve than to be served.

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# Variations in Undergraduate Language Learning Strategies: Insights from Oxford's Strategy in Language Learning

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the preferences for language learning strategies among 143 undergraduate students using a modified version of Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Analyzing the means and using Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), results revealed metacognitive strategies as the most preferred across gender, year level, and academic program, and affective and cognitive strategies as the least utilized. The use of language learning strategies is predominant among females, first year students, and BSSciEd program. There were no significant differences in preferences for language learning strategies between gender and academic programs, but significant differences in the use of cognitive and memory strategies were found between first and second year students, with the former using these strategies more than the latter. These findings highlight the need for gender-sensitive and tailored educational practices that account for these variations to enhance academic success. Observed dynamics across year levels further implies curriculum planning that is flexible enough to evolve with students' academic progression.

**Keywords:** Language learning, Inventory of learning strategies, Learning preferences, Management of learning

## Introduction

### *Research Background and Motivation*

Language learning is a multifaceted process requiring diverse strategies to improve comprehension, retention, and application of linguistic skills. Investigating language learning strategies (LLS) is crucial for educational psychology and applied linguistics, given its influence on language acquisition and academic achievement. Factors such as gender (Budiarti, 2022; Hapsari, 2019), academic level (Ahsanah, 2020), and field of study (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989) can significantly affect strategy use, which underscores the importance of tailoring educational practices to diverse learner needs.

However, most of the focus is on students specializing in English or those who are native speakers of English, leaving a gap in understanding the preferences of college education students who use English as a second language. This study could help in the development of effective teaching strategies and curriculum tailored to this demographic.

This study explored the preferences of non-English major undergraduate students and identified patterns in their language learning strategies. The theoretical framework for this study is based on Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), which categorizes strategies into metacognitive, cognitive, memory, compensation, social, and affective types.

This exploration into the preferences of college education students who are not specializing in any English discipline and do not speak English as a native language becomes evidently relevant when profiles of these preferences could be created to see if there were patterns or trends and how it could assist in lesson and strategy preparations and curriculum development.

Research on language learning strategies has revealed significant variations based on the previously stated demographic factors. One study found that female learners often use social strategies such as initiating conversations more than males (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). This highlights the importance of social interaction in language acquisition.

Marinković & Pešić (2020) noted that first-year students tend to adopt different strategies compared to their higher year-level counterparts, with beginners relying on basic memorization while more advanced learners engage in critical thinking and self-regulation.

Metacognitive strategies are frequently preferred across demographics, as indicated by multiple studies (Alfian, 2021; Budiarti, 2022; M. Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020; T. M. Lestari & Fatimah, 2020). On the other hand, another research suggests that memory strategies are favored, particularly among early-stage learners (Zeena et al., 2021).

Compensation strategies are also commonly used to navigate gaps in language proficiency and showcases the students' adaptability in communication (Faiz et al., 2020). The relevance of strategy use can differ across academic disciplines, reflecting the unique demands of each program (Budiarti, 2022).

### ***Research Questions***

This study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What are the language learning strategy preferences across demographic factors such as gender, year level, and academic program among undergraduate students?
2. How do language learning strategy preferences vary across gender, year level, and academic programs?
3. What are the implications of these differences for curriculum design and educational practice?

### ***Methodology***

#### ***Participants***

The study involved 143 undergraduate students taking education programs offered by a state university. Participants were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representation across gender, academic years, and fields of study.

#### ***Instrument***

A modified version of Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was used to assess participants' strategy preference. The modification was designed to better fit the study's context and ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant strategies. The instrument composed of a 30-item Likert Scale survey questionnaire which was administered via Google Forms.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted with 30 undergraduate students from the same population, and the responses were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha for internal consistency. This statistical measure yielded an acceptable alpha value of 0.78, indicating that the instrument is reliable for the target group. The modification to the original SILL consisted only of the removal of one item as suggested by the Cronbach's Alpha scores. Moreover, to support the validity of the modified SILL, content validity was assessed by three language experts in the department. Their positive feedback confirmed that the instrument covered all relevant constructs, and is both clear and relevant to the target group.

## Procedure

Participants accomplished the modified SILL questionnaire online on a given period during the semester. It included 30 items that intended to capture their preference for each type of strategy. Privacy in data collection was ensured to encourage honest responses.

## Data Analysis

The data collected via Google Forms was analyzed using Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). This was done to identify significant differences in strategy preferences of the students across gender, academic year, and academic program. The tabulated data were further explored to determine if there were specific patterns and trends.

## Results and Discussion

The respondents were the 143 students of a state university in the Philippines. Majority are females (118 or 82.5%) while only 25 or 17.5% are males. In terms of year level, most of the respondents are in their second year (71 or 49.7%) followed by the third year (39 or 27.3%) and the First year (33 or 23.1%). Seventy-seven (53.8%) of them are taking BSED Math, while both BTLED and BSED Science students comprised of 33 or 23.1% for each.

### Gender Differences in Language Strategies Preference

Analyzing language strategy preference according to gender yielded metacognitive strategies as most preferred between both the male ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 0.55$ ) and female ( $M = 4.01$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ) respondents as shown in Table 1. On the other hand, in terms of least used strategy, the male students' answers leaned towards affective strategies ( $M = 3.46$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ) while the females were shown to favor cognitive strategies least ( $M = 3.61$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ ). Females have generally higher means compared to males, with females registering the highest mean for language learning strategy.

Table 1: Strategy preference according to gender (n=143)

SILL Categories	Male		Female	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Memory Strategies	3.52	.66	3.61	.60
Cognitive Strategies	3.50	.67	3.60	.61
Compensation Strategies	3.79	.53	3.66	.69
Metacognition Strategies	3.92	.55	4.01	.66
Affective Strategies	3.46	.57	3.62	.82
Social Strategies	3.79	.67	3.86	.73

However, further investigation into the use of all the learning strategies between male and female students revealed no significant differences at the conventional alpha level of 0.05 as seen in Table 2. This suggests that despite some variations, gender does not significantly influence the preference for language learning strategies and that observed differences are not statistically significant. This supports the studies of Ahsanah (2020) and Faiz et al. (2020) which found no significant differences between males and females in the preference of language learning strategies.

Table 2. Variation of language learning strategies by gender

SILL Categories	Gender Comparison	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig. (p-value)	95% Confidence Interval
Memory Strategies	Male vs Female	-0.09	0.13	0.503	[-0.348,0.172]
Cognitive Strategies	Male vs Female	-0.11	0.14	0.447	[-0.371,0.164]

Compensation Strategies	Male vs Female	0.13	0.15	0.360	[-0.155, 0.424]
Metacognition Strategies	Male vs Female	-0.08	0.15	0.583	[-0.370, 0.209]
Affective Strategies	Male vs Female	-0.12	0.18	0.487	[-0.477, 0.228]
Social Strategies	Male vs Female	-0.06	0.16	0.710	[-0.384, 0.262]

*The mean difference is significant at 0.05 level.*

### ***Year-Level Differences in Language Strategies Preference***

Table 3 revealed metacognitive strategies were the most favored by both the second year and third year students respectively ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ;  $M = 4.05$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ) while the same ranked second among the first year students who favored social strategies ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ ). The preference for metacognitive strategies reflect the findings of many researches which revealed this strategy set to be a preference among their respondents (Alfian, 2021; Budiarti, 2022; M. Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020; T. M. Lestari & Fatimah, 2020).

The first year preferred cognitive strategies the least ( $M = 3.68$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ) while memory strategies were the least preferred by the second year ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 0.60$ ) and affective strategies by the third year students ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ). The result does not coincide with the studies showing that cognitive and compensation strategies were among the most commonly preferred and used by students (Aziz & Shah, 2020; Faiz et al., 2020; Zeena et al., 2021).

The third year students registered the highest mean in Table 3. However, it is the first year who generally have higher overall mean scores indicating that they use language learning strategies more frequently than their peers.

Table 3. Strategy preference according to Year Level (n=143)

SILL Categories	First Year		Second Year		Third Year	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Memory Strategies	3.84	0.65	3.47	0.60	3.62	0.53
Cognitive Strategies	3.68	0.69	3.48	0.57	3.71	0.61
Compensation Strategies	3.90	0.76	3.49	0.57	3.85	0.65
Metacognition Strategies	3.93	0.88	3.99	0.52	4.05	0.62
Affective Strategies	3.77	0.87	3.51	0.77	3.59	0.74
Social Strategies	3.98	0.87	3.78	0.67	3.87	0.66

Table 4 shows the results of the MANOVA examining learning strategies preference among the three year levels. Significant differences were observed in memory strategies between first year and second year students ( $p = .001$ ) as well as between first year and third year students ( $p = .015$ ). However, there is no significance difference found between second year and third year students ( $p = .461$ ).

Cognitive strategies also showed significant differences between first year and second Year students ( $p = .010$ ), but not between first year and third year students ( $p = .444$ ) and between second year and third year students ( $p = .118$ ).

No significant differences were found in the preference of compensation, metacognitive, affective and social strategies across the different year levels ( $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that first year students prefer memory strategies more frequently than second and third year students. However, there were no significant differences in memory strategy preference between second and third year students, implying that their preference of the strategy are on a similar level.



Table 4. Variation of language learning strategies by year level

SILL Categories	Year level Comparison	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig. (p-value)	95% Confidence Interval
Memory Strategies	First vs. Second Year	0.55	0.16	0.001	[0.231, 0.858]
	First vs. Third Year	0.43	0.17	0.015	[0.086, 0.772]
	Second vs. Third Year	-0.12	0.16	0.461	[-0.425, 0.194]
Cognitive Strategies	First vs. Second Year	0.42	0.16	0.010	[0.101, 0.746]
	First vs. Third Year	0.14	0.18	0.444	[-0.216, 0.491]
	Second vs. Third Year	-0.29	0.16	0.078	[-0.605, 0.032]
Compensation Strategies	First vs. Second Year	0.35	0.18	0.051	[-0.001, 0.697]
	First vs. Third Year	0.07	0.19	0.702	[-0.308, 0.456]
	Second vs. Third Year	-0.27	0.17	0.118	[-0.618, 0.071]
Metacognition Strategies	First vs. Second Year	0.02	0.18	0.909	[-0.329, 0.369]
	First vs. Third Year	0.11	0.19	0.572	[-0.273, 0.492]
	Second vs. Third Year	0.09	0.17	0.609	[-0.256, 0.434]
Affective Strategies	First vs. Second Year	0.27	0.22	0.208	[-0.153, 0.697]
	First vs. Third Year	0.29	0.24	0.223	[-0.178, 0.754]
	Second vs. Third Year	0.02	0.21	0.940	[-0.404, 0.436]
Social Strategies	First vs. Second Year	0.24	0.20	0.217	[-0.145, 0.634]
	First vs. Third Year	0.25	0.22	0.241	[-0.173, 0.681]
	Second vs. Third Year	0.01	0.20	0.960	[-0.375, 0.395]

*The mean difference is significant at 0.05 level.*

### ***Program Differences in Language Strategies Preference***

Grouping the respondents according to course, Table 5 revealed that metacognitive strategies were the most preferred for both BTLED- HE and BSED Math ( $M = 3.96$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ;  $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 0.55$  respectively). The strategy was bested by Social strategies ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $0.87$ ) among the BSED SciEd students. This gives support to the studies of Alfian (2021), Budiarti (2022), M. Lestari & Wahyudin (2020), and T. M. Lestari and Fatimah (2020) which highlighted metacognitive strategies as the most commonly preferred between sexes.

Table 5. Strategy preference according to academic program (n=143)

SILL Categories	BTLED HE		BSED Math		BSED SciEd	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Memory Strategies	3.48	0.61	3.54	0.56	3.84	0.65
Cognitive Strategies	3.51	0.46	3.58	0.64	3.68	0.69
Compensation Strategies	3.48	0.60	3.68	0.63	3.90	0.76
Metacognition Strategies	3.98	0.57	4.02	0.55	3.93	0.88
Affective Strategies	3.55	0.79	3.53	0.75	3.77	0.87
Social Strategies	3.79	0.63	3.82	0.68	3.98	0.87

The BTLED students reported both memory and compensation strategies as least preferred ( $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ ;  $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = 0.60$  respectively), while BSED Math students least preferred affective strategies ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ) and cognitive strategies for BSED Science ( $M = 3.68$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ). BSED Math students recorded the highest mean in language learning strategies, but it is the SciEd students who used language learning strategies more than their peers.

Table 6 summarizes the MANOVA results of preference of language learning strategies across the different academic programs. The mean for memory strategies were significantly different between BTLED-HE and BSED SciEd ( $p = .037$ ), and BSED Math and BSED SciEd ( $p < .05$ ), but not between BTLED-HE and BSED Math ( $p = .456$ ).

Significant differences in cognitive strategies preference were noted between BSED Math and BSED SciEd students ( $p = .028$ ), but not between BTLED-HE and BSED Math students ( $p = .768$ ) or between BTLED HE and BSED SciEd students for Cognitive Strategies. There was significant difference between BSED Math and BSED SciEd ( $p = .028$ ), but not between BTLED-HE and BSED Math ( $p = .768$ ) and BTLED-HE and BSED SciEd ( $p = .156$ ). This indicates that BTLED HE students use memory strategies significantly less than BSED SciEd students.

The means signifying preference for compensation strategies, metacognition strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies were not significantly different in all the rest of the year levels compared ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Table 6. Variation of language learning strategies by academic program

SILL Categories	Year level comparison		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig. (p-value)	95% Confidence Interval
Memory Strategies	BTLED-HE	BSED MATH	0.13	0.18	0.46	[-0.218, 0.483]
	BTLED-HE	BSED SCIED	-0.42	0.20	0.04	[-0.811, -0.025]
	BSED MATH	BSED SCIED	0.55	0.15	0.00	[0.252, 0.849]
Cognitive Strategies	BTLED-HE	BSED MATH	0.05	0.18	0.77	[-0.308, 0.416]
	BTLED-HE	BSED SCIED	-0.29	0.21	0.16	[-0.697, 0.112]
	BSED MATH	BSED SCIED	-0.35	0.16	0.03	[-0.654, -0.039]
Compensation Strategies	BTLED-HE	BSED MATH	-0.02	0.20	0.91	[-0.413, 0.369]
	BTLED-HE	BSED SCIED	-0.27	0.22	0.22	[-0.709, 0.166]
	BSED MATH	BSED SCIED	-0.25	0.17	0.14	[-0.581, 0.083]
Metacognition Strategies	BTLED-HE	BSED MATH	0.00	0.20	0.98	[-0.395, 0.387]
	BTLED-HE	BSED SCIED	-0.05	0.22	0.81	[-0.490, 0.385]
	BSED MATH	BSED SCIED	-0.05	0.17	0.77	[-0.381, 0.284]
Affective Strategies	BTLED-HE	BSED MATH	0.25	0.24	0.30	[-0.228, 0.725]
	BTLED-HE	BSED SCIED	-0.11	0.27	0.68	[-0.645, 0.422]
	BSED MATH	BSED SCIED	-0.36	0.21	0.08	[-0.765, 0.045]
Social Strategies	BTLED-HE	BSED MATH	0.10	0.22	0.65	[-0.335, 0.538]
	BTLED-HE	BSED SCIED	-0.18	0.25	0.47	[-0.669, 0.309]
	BSED MATH	BSED SCIED	-0.28	0.19	0.14	[-0.653, 0.090]

*The mean difference is significant at 0.05 level.*

### ***Implications for Curriculum Design and Educational Practice***

The study's findings emphasize several key implications for language education. Gender-based differences in strategy preferences imply the need for gender-sensitive teaching approaches, suggesting that instructional methods could be designed to align with these preferences. For instance, integrating more metacognitive and social elements might benefit female students, while male students could benefit from additional resources focused on compensation strategies. While these implications, when applied, may facilitate more engagement on the part of the students, lesson preparations may become more time-consuming on the part of the instructor, having to plan for differentiated instruction in his or her classes.

The preference for social strategies among freshmen students may stem from their being new to the tertiary level, and while adjusting, most of them tend to rely on their social skills as they navigate their specialized programs, create connections and adjust to their new environment. As they become more adjusted and are able to identify their learning styles and preferences, they evolve and begin to adapt other strategies in language learning to maximize their experiences.

These observed dynamics across academic years indicate a need to strategize planning lessons that may support students' academic progression. First-year students' heightened use of social strategies could be addressed by introducing techniques that enhance the memory early on, while more advanced students might benefit from strategies that promote higher-order cognitive skills.

Differences in strategy preference among academic programs suggest that curriculum designers should also take into consideration the specific needs and characteristics of each discipline. Adapting language learning strategies to fit different academic contexts could enhance effectiveness of instruction and better support student success.

## Conclusion

The study found out that the use of language learning strategies are predominant among females, first year students, and BSSciEd program compared with the rest of the groups.

Metacognitive strategies are the most preferred by almost all respondents when grouped according to gender, year level and academic program with BSED Math students showing the highest mean preference. Affective and cognitive strategies were found to be the least preferred across year level and academic programs while social and compensation strategies were the least preferred when grouped according to gender.

There were no significant difference in preferences of language learning strategies between gender and academic programs, but significant differences in the use of cognitive and memory strategies were found between first and second year students, with the former using the strategies more than the latter. Memory strategies use differ significantly between first year students and their seniors, with the former using the strategies more compared with the rest of the year levels.

## Recommendations

Using instrument which relies on perceptions and self-reported data was seen as a limitation of this study because the information given by respondents may be influenced by various biases and subjected to misinterpretation, and therefore may not fully capture actual strategy use. Additionally, the focus on a single institution may limit the generalizability of the findings.

To address these, future research could consider incorporating mixed-method approaches that combine quantitative and qualitative methods to provide more insight into the context behind the students' strategy choices. Further, a wider range of institutions could be explored, including those with diverse student populations and different educational contexts for a more established and applicable findings and conclusions.

Future research could explore a wider range of institutions and use mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into language learning strategy use and ensure that findings are broadly applicable across educational settings.

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# The Relationship between Learning Readiness, Motivation, and Learning Styles Among Focus Students in the Gombak District Transformation Program 2024: Implications for Intervention Module Development

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## ABSTRACT

The District Transformation Program (DTP), part of Malaysia's Education Blueprint, aims to enhance educational quality and address disparities between urban and rural districts. This study investigates the relationships between learning readiness, motivation, and learning styles among focus students in the Gombak. A quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design was used, involving 642 students from eight secondary schools. The study objectives include identifying dominant learning styles, assessing levels of readiness and motivation, and examining the relationships between these variables. Data was collected through structured questionnaires covering demographic information, learning style inventories (VARK), readiness scales, and motivation scales. The findings show that visual learning was the dominant style among students (39.9%), followed by kinaesthetic (34.5%) and auditory (28.6%) styles. The average learning motivation was high (mean = 4.28), with moderate variation in readiness (mean = 3.88). A strong, positive correlation was found between learning readiness and motivation ( $r = 0.626$ ). However, ANOVA results indicate that learning styles did not significantly predict motivation or readiness. These findings suggest that while visual learning is predominant, other factors beyond learning style may significantly influence motivation and readiness. The results underscore the need for a multifaceted approach in DTP, incorporating various learning styles, focusing on intrinsic motivation, and enhancing emotional and environmental support for students. The insights from this study will help in developing targeted intervention modules aimed at improving student outcomes in the District Transformation Program.

**Keywords:** District Transformation Program, Learning Readiness, Motivation, Learning Styles

## Introduction

The District Transformation Program (DTP) is an initiative under the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) aimed at improving the quality and efficiency of education at the district level. One of the main focuses of DTP is to reduce the educational gap between districts, particularly between urban and rural schools. Through this program, equal access to quality education can be achieved, thus helping students reach their full potential. The Gombak District Education Office is also involved in implementing this program. This program, which focuses on Form Five students, is conducted in six schools, involving 658 students. This study was conducted to provide these students with appropriate programs related to their learning motivation, learning readiness, and learning styles.

## Learning Motivation

Learning motivation refers to the internal or external drive that encourages an individual to engage in the learning process. It can be divided into two types: intrinsic motivation, which comes from within the student, such as the desire to learn or interest in a subject, and extrinsic motivation, which comes from external factors like rewards, recognition, or pressure from others. Locke and Latham (1990) define

learning motivation as the intrinsic drive within students to set and achieve specific learning goals. They emphasize that learning motivation exists when students set clear, specific, and challenging goals that then drive them to strive for higher performance. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), motivation is an internal process that drives individuals to take specific actions, achieve goals, or seek satisfaction from existing desires. Motivation can originate from internal drives. They also developed the Self-Determination Theory, which states that three psychological needs drive intrinsic motivation and well-being: autonomy, which is the need to feel free and in control of one's choices and actions, competence, and relatedness, which is the need to have significant relationships with others.

### ***Learning Readiness***

Learning readiness refers to the level of physical and mental preparedness of students to begin and continue the learning process. This includes aspects such as students' cognitive, emotional, and motivational capacities that support their learning activities. According to Bandura (1997), learning readiness is closely related to self-efficacy, which is an individual's confidence in their ability to complete tasks or achieve specific goals. Individuals with high self-efficacy are generally more prepared to learn and face new challenges. Gardner (1983) emphasizes the importance of developing various types of intelligence. According to him, learning readiness can be enhanced by considering and using different learning methods that align with individual intelligence.

### ***Learning Styles***

Learning styles refer to the different ways and approaches students use to acquire, process, and retain information. The three main learning styles are visual (learning through seeing), auditory (learning through listening), and kinesthetic (learning through movement and touch). According to Sternberg and Zhang (2001), learning styles refer to the most effective ways for someone to process and absorb information. The three main learning styles identified are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Visual learners understand and remember information better in visual forms such as pictures, diagrams, charts, or videos. They tend to learn better through sight rather than hearing or experience. This style involves creating mind maps or diagrams to organize information, using flashcards with pictures or symbols, and watching educational videos or presentations. Auditory learners find it easier to understand and remember information that is heard. They tend to learn better by listening to podcasts or recorded lectures, reading texts aloud, or discussing and working in groups to review material. Kinesthetic learners understand and remember information better through physical experiences or actions. They tend to learn better through practical activities rather than sight or hearing, conducting experiments or practical projects, using physical aids or models to understand concepts, and role-playing or performing simulations to grasp new situations or concepts.

### **Objectives**

1. Identify the dominant learning style among participants of the District Transformation Program.
2. Measure the level of learning motivation and readiness among participants of the District Transformation Program.
3. Analyze the relationship between learning readiness and learning motivation among the participants of the District Transformation Program.
4. Analyse the relationship between learning styles and participants' learning readiness.
5. Examine the relationship between learning styles and participants' learning motivation.
6. Dtermine the influence of learning styles on participants' learning readiness and motivation simultaneously.

### **Previous Studies**

Several previous studies have explored learning motivation, learning readiness, and learning styles. Hassan and Ismail (2021) studied the relationship between intrinsic motivation and learning styles among foundation program students in Selangor. The findings showed that intrinsic motivation is closely related

to visual and auditory learning styles. Yusof and Mahmud (2022) examined the relationship between learning readiness and academic achievement with learning styles among students. The study found that students with a kinesthetic learning style demonstrated higher levels of learning readiness, which in turn improved their academic performance. Nordin and Latif (2023) conducted a study on the impact of learning styles on learning motivation among primary school students in Kedah. The study found that auditory and kinesthetic learning styles significantly influenced students' learning motivation. These studies have demonstrated that there is a relationship between learning motivation, learning readiness, and learning styles across different age groups of students. A study by Mohamed and Hassan (2017) examined the relationship between learning motivation and academic achievement among secondary school students in Melaka. This study found that intrinsic motivation plays an important role in enhancing students' academic achievement. Rahman and Ismail (2018) in their study investigated the influence of learning styles on academic performance at a rural secondary school in Pahang. The study results showed that students with an auditory learning style were more likely to achieve higher academic performance. The findings of Yusoff and Ahmad (2019) further examined the relationship between learning readiness and learning styles among university students in Malaysia. The study results indicated that students with a kinesthetic learning style had higher levels of learning readiness compared to other students. Salleh and Ibrahim (2020) investigated the influence of learning motivation on learning styles among vocational college students in Malaysia. This study found that students with extrinsic motivation tend to choose visual and auditory learning styles. The study by Lim and Kamarudin (2021) examined the relationship between learning styles and learning readiness among primary school students in Selangor. The results showed that students with a visual learning style were better prepared to engage in structured learning environments. The auditory and kinesthetic learning styles significantly influenced students' learning motivation. These studies have demonstrated that there is a relationship between learning motivation, learning readiness, and learning styles across all student age groups.

### ***Motivation Theory***

The Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Theory, introduced by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan in 1985, is one of the most influential motivation theories in psychology. This theory is part of a larger framework known as Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes the importance of basic psychological needs in individual development and well-being. Deci and Ryan (1985) stated that intrinsic motivation refers to the drive to engage in an activity because the activity itself provides internal satisfaction or enjoyment. Individuals who are intrinsically motivated do not require external rewards to participate in a task. Examples include the enjoyment and satisfaction of curiosity in learning. Deci and Ryan argue that intrinsic motivation is the most effective and sustainable because it stems from genuine interest and desire to do something. In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to the drive to engage in an activity because of external rewards or pressures. Individuals who are extrinsically motivated participate in certain activities to achieve outcomes different from the activity itself. Examples of this motivation include material rewards, praise, recognition, and social pressure. Deci and Ryan suggest that while extrinsic motivation can be effective in the short term, it may not be sustainable in the long term because it relies on external rewards or pressures that may not always be available. Extrinsic motivation can also undermine intrinsic motivation if external rewards diminish the genuine enjoyment or interest in an activity.

In Self-Determination Theory, Deci and Ryan do not view motivation as a binary (intrinsic vs. extrinsic) but as a continuum. Along this continuum, extrinsic motivation can vary in the degree of self-regulation:

1. **Amotivation:** Lack of motivation, where a person has no drive to do something.
2. **Extrinsic with External Control:** Actions are taken solely to avoid punishment or gain rewards.
3. **Introjection:** Individuals feel internal pressure to act, such as guilt or responsibility.
4. **Identification:** Individuals accept that the task is important and valuable, even if it is done under external encouragement.
5. **Integration:** The task is seen as part of oneself and personal values, even if it originates from external sources.
6. **Intrinsic Motivation:** Actions are taken entirely due to internal interest or enjoyment.

In the educational context, Deci and Ryan's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theory emphasizes that teachers and educators should strive to enhance students' intrinsic motivation by creating learning environments that support students' basic psychological needs, such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In this way, students are more likely to engage deeply and effectively in learning and experience better psychological well-being. This theory also suggests that while rewards and punishments can be used in education, they should be applied cautiously to avoid undermining students' intrinsic motivation. Educators are encouraged to focus on cultivating students' interest and desire to learn, rather than merely providing external rewards. Overall, this theory offers essential guidance for understanding how motivation can be built and sustained and its implications in various fields such as education, work, and personal development.

### ***Learning Readiness Theory - Social Cognitive Theory (Albert Bandura)***

This theory is one of the most influential psychological theories in understanding learning and human behaviour. It is closely related to learning readiness and emphasizes that learning results from the dynamic interaction between cognitive, environmental, and individual behaviour factors. One of the most critical concepts in Social Cognitive Theory is self-efficacy, the confidence in one's ability to perform and complete specific tasks. Among the main components of this theory are observational learning and reciprocal determinism, which are closely related to behaviour and cognitive factors, where individuals are influenced by their environment but also have the capacity to influence that environment through their actions. Self-regulation refers to the ability to control one's behaviour through processes such as goal-setting, self-monitoring, and self-assessment. Students who can self-regulate tend to be more effective in learning because they can set and achieve their goals. Self-efficacy is a central component of Social Cognitive Theory. It refers to a person's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions necessary to achieve desired outcomes. Bandura stated that self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining how people think, behave, and feel. In an educational context, understanding and promoting self-efficacy is essential to enhancing students' learning readiness. Teachers and educators can play a significant role in building students' self-efficacy by:

1. Providing opportunities for success experiences through tasks tailored to the students' level.
2. Using appropriate role models to demonstrate how success can be achieved.
3. Giving constructive feedback and encouraging students to believe in their abilities.
4. Helping students manage stress and anxiety through effective self-management strategies.

By doing so, students will be better prepared to learn and achieve higher performance, as well as face challenges with greater confidence.

### ***Learning Styles: Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic***

The theory that classifies visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles is the VARK model, introduced by Neil Fleming in 1987. VARK stands for Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic, referring to the four primary modalities of how individuals are more likely to receive and process information.

#### ***Visual Learning Style***

Students with a visual learning style are more likely to learn and understand information better through the use of images, graphics, maps, charts, and diagrams. They require visualization to understand concepts and prefer learning materials that involve colours, shapes, and patterns. They may be more inclined to use visual aids such as mind maps or flashcards while studying. Characteristics of visual learners include better recall of information when seen in the form of pictures or graphics, a preference for using colours, symbols, and images in notes, and a tendency to learn through maps, diagrams, and illustrations.



### ***Auditory Learning Style***

Students with an auditory learning style are more inclined to learn by listening. They are better at understanding and remembering information delivered verbally, such as through lectures, discussions, or audio recordings. They may prefer reading notes aloud or participating in group discussions as a method of learning. Auditory learners are characterized by a preference for listening to verbal explanations or lectures over reading text, a tendency to repeat information out loud to understand or memorize, and a stronger ability to learn through group discussions or listening to audio recordings.

### ***Kinesthetic Learning Style***

Students with a kinesthetic learning style prefer to learn by doing. They are better at understanding and remembering information through physical experiences such as touch, experimentation, or movement. They may be more interested in learning that involves physical activity or practical-based learning. Characteristics of kinesthetic learners include a preference for hands-on or physical activities, a tendency to touch, feel, or use physical aids in learning, and difficulty sitting still for long periods, with a preference for learning that involves movement.

The VARK model has been widely used in education as a tool to help teachers adapt their teaching approaches to better suit the needs of different students. By understanding the dominant learning styles among their students, teachers can provide more effective learning materials and teaching methods. Some of the methods used include:

1. For visual learners, teachers can use teaching aids such as graphics, diagrams, and concept maps.
2. For auditory learners, teachers can emphasize verbal teaching and discussions, as well as using audio aids.
3. For kinesthetic learners, teachers can integrate physical activities or practical simulations into the learning process.

The VARK model continues to be a useful tool for helping students understand and identify how they learn best, although it is not a perfect approach for all situations.

### **Research Methodology**

This study uses a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design, selected to examine the relationship between variables within a large population over a short period of time. The study population consists of 653 students in the Gombak District Transformation Program, involving eight secondary schools. The number of focus students involved in this program is detailed in Table 1:

**Table 1: Number of Focused Students by School**

<b>School Name</b>	<b>Number of Focused Students</b>
SMK Sierramas	55
SMK Seri Garing	89
SMK Taman Ehsan	90
SMK Tuanku Abdul Rahman	37
SMK Seri Selayang	89
SMK Bandar Baru Sungai Buloh	122
SMK Ideal Heights	85
SMK Gombak Setia	86

School Name	Number of Focused Students
Total	653

The sample will be selected using a stratified random sampling method, where stratification will be based on students' gender and socioeconomic status. The required sample size is 416, determined using the Krejcie and Morgan formula, considering a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), for populations exceeding 500, the sample size should be 217, while for a population of 1,000, the sample size should be 278. However, the researcher has conducted the study using a sample of 416 students according to the school.

The research instrument includes a questionnaire that covers demographic information, the Learning Style Inventory (such as the VARK Questionnaire), the Learning Readiness Scale (adapted from the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale), and the Learning Motivation Scale (adapted from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire). The validity and reliability of this instrument will be tested through a pilot study and Cronbach's alpha analysis. A pilot study conducted among students from SMK Taman Ehsan Gombak, Selangor, showed a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.86. DeVellis (1991) suggests that a value between 0.70 and 0.80 is acceptable for newly developed instruments, while a value between 0.80 and 0.90 indicates very good reliability. The data collection process will be conducted online using Google Forms, with participants given two weeks to complete the questionnaire. Reminders will be sent after one week to increase response rates.

Data analysis will be performed using SPSS software, involving both descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis will cover frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, while inferential analysis will involve Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis, one-way ANOVA, and path analysis. This study also considers ethical considerations by obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and securing data storage. However, the study is limited to participants in the District Transformation Program, and there may be response bias in using self-reported questionnaires.

## Findings

The study found that the dominant learning style among the District Transformation Program (DTP) participants in Gombak is visual learning. The data shows that 39.9% of respondents adopt this learning style, while 34.5% use kinaesthetic learning, and 28.6% utilize auditory learning. This suggests that DTP focus students in Gombak are more inclined toward visual learning, though the percentage difference between the various learning styles is not significant.

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Variables**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Learning Motivation	4.28	0.409
Learning Readiness	3.88	0.536
Emotional Aspect of Learning	3.72	0.635
Cognitive Aspect of Learning	3.98	0.585
Environmental Aspect of Learning	3.93	0.600

The findings indicate that the mean score for learning motivation is 4.28, suggesting that the motivation level among respondents is high on a scale of 2 to 5. With a standard deviation of 0.409, the data shows little variation in learning motivation among respondents, indicating that most have a consistent and relatively high motivation level.

The mean of 3.88 indicates that learning readiness is relatively high but slightly lower than learning motivation. The higher standard deviation of 0.536 compared to learning motivation suggests there is more variation in learning readiness.

Regarding readiness based on aspects:

1. **Cognitive Aspect:** The highest mean (3.98) suggests that readiness in terms of thinking and understanding is at a high level.
2. **Environmental Aspect:** A mean of 3.93 indicates a conducive learning environment is crucial for readiness.
3. **Emotional Aspect:** The lowest mean (3.72) highlights challenges in emotional readiness compared to cognitive and environmental readiness.

### Correlation between Learning Readiness and Motivation

The Pearson correlation value ( $r = 0.626$ ) shows a positive relationship between learning readiness and learning motivation. As learning motivation increases, learning readiness also tends to increase. The strength of the relationship, with a value of 0.626, indicates a strong correlation between the two variables. The relationship is significant, proving that the two variables are closely related in the analyzed population.

### ANOVA Analysis Results

The ANOVA analysis shows ( $p = 0.963$ ), indicating that learning style is not a significant predictor of learning motivation. The usual significance level used is 0.05, and because the p-value is too large, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. This means that learning style does not significantly affect learning motivation.

### Post-Hoc Test Results

The post-hoc analysis using Tukey HSD and Bonferroni tests shows no significant difference in learning readiness between students with auditory, visual, and kinaesthetic learning styles. All comparisons between learning style categories show p-values exceeding the significance level of 0.05. The small mean differences between categories indicate that learning style does not significantly influence overall learning readiness in this group.

**Table 3: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances**

Test	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Learning Readiness	Mean	.116	2	.399
Learning Motivation	Mean	1.810	2	.399

The findings indicate no significant differences in learning motivation and readiness between different learning styles. The influence of learning style in this study is  $F = 1.593$  with a p-value (Sig.) = 0.174. The data shows no significant differences in learning readiness and motivation between auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners.

**Table 4: Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable	(I) Learning Style	(J) Learning Style	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Learning Readiness	Audio	Visual	.00	.065	.999
	Audio	Kinesthetic	.12	.069	.210
	Visual	Kinesthetic	-.12	.064	.145
Learning Motivation	Audio	Visual	-.03	.048	.747

## Discussion

Recent studies support the finding that visual learning is the preferred style among DTP students. Xu and Fan (2019) found that students are more likely to understand and remember information when presented in visual formats, such as graphics, images, and charts. Wang et al. (2020) found that kinesthetic learning through physical activities and hands-on experiences improves student motivation and engagement. Similarly, Chaudhary and Choudhary (2018) showed that auditory learning helps with concentration and long-term memory retention.

In the context of the DTP, visual learning can be beneficial, but given the representation of kinesthetic and auditory styles, a comprehensive teaching approach must encompass multiple learning styles to benefit all students. The findings also show that student motivation is high, consistent with research by Rahman et al. (2020), which found high learning motivation among Malaysian secondary school students engaged in interactive and collaborative learning activities.

However, learning readiness varies slightly. Ismail and Hassan (2019) suggest that factors such as family support, learning environment, and technology use impact readiness. Ahmad et al. (2018) noted that programs like DTP have improved both motivation and learning readiness by using student-centered approaches and technology integration.

## Recommendations

Several recommendations can be considered to ensure the success of the District Transformation Program (DTP) in Malaysia. These suggestions focus on increasing student motivation and readiness to learn, as well as the introduction of suitable modules in the DTP program.

### 1. Student-Centered Teaching Approach

A student-focused teaching approach should be introduced, with teachers trained to implement interactive methods, such as Project-Based Learning (PBL) and cooperative learning.

### 2. Incorporating Technology into Teaching

Educational technology such as digital learning and multimedia should be integrated into the teaching process. Applications like gamification can boost student motivation.

### 3. Building Intrinsic Motivation

Introducing modules that foster intrinsic motivation, such as self-improvement and career guidance programs, will help build students' internal drive to succeed.

### 4. Emotional Support and Positive Learning Environments

Emotional and social support from teachers and peers plays a critical role in motivating and preparing students for learning.

### 5. Increased Parental and Community Involvement

Encouraging parental involvement and community engagement in education can enhance the support system for students, contributing to higher motivation and readiness.

## Suggested Modules

1. **Project-Based Learning (PBL)**  
Encourages students to apply learning concepts through practical projects, fostering creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration.
2. **Integrated Digital Learning**  
Uses digital teaching aids like videos and interactive software to enhance learning through various styles.
3. **Guidance and Self-Development Modules**  
Focuses on students' intrinsic motivation through career guidance, self-reflection, and leadership training.
4. **Positive Learning Environment Development Modules**  
Focuses on building positive relationships between teachers and students, peer interactions, and psychosocial support.
5. **School-Parent Collaboration Modules**  
Engages parents actively in their children's education through open days, workshops, and extracurricular support.

## Conclusion

The District Transformation Program (DTP) was implemented to enhance motivation, readiness, and learning styles among students. The study examined the relationship between learning styles, motivation, and readiness, focusing on visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. The findings show significant relationships between learning styles and both motivation and readiness, with kinesthetic and auditory styles improving students' readiness and motivation.

Teachers are encouraged to address individual learning needs and create supportive learning environments to foster intrinsic motivation. DTP should focus on supporting diverse learning styles, building internal motivation, utilizing educational technology, and providing emotional and social support for students. By introducing appropriate modules, DTP can ensure that every student receives a well-rounded education that enhances motivation, readiness, and academic achievement.

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# Why Using Mind Maps is Ineffective in Listening Comprehension: The case of University of Foreign Language Studies

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## ABSTRACT

Research has demonstrated that mind maps have a significant impact on the development of four language skills of EFL students. The use of mind maps is also expected to positively affect the improvement of listening comprehension for students at University of Foreign Language Studies – The University of Danang (UFLS-UD). The study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the integration and effectiveness of using mind maps to enhance listening comprehension of freshman students at Faculty of English, UFLS-UD. Initially, by using classroom observations and questionnaires given to first-year students, the study investigates the frequency and stages of mind map use during listening periods. The results show that mind maps are a common tool used by freshman students, especially in the pre-listening stage when they anticipate lexical resources and content of the theme. Subsequently, a quasi-experimental design with pre- and post-test assessments is used to evaluate how well mind maps improve listening comprehension. Contrary to initial assumptions, the results reveal a decrease in listening comprehension scores post-intervention. In the end, a set of questionnaires is delivered to find out the factors which contribute to this ineffectiveness. They include time length to draw a mind map, their terrible drawing skill, distraction from listening due to cognitive overload from mind map creation, delays in processing information as students engage with visual organization, and visual overload from complex mind map structures. This study sheds important light on the ways in which mind maps fall short of assisting freshman students to develop effective listening comprehension skills. To optimize language learning outcomes in listening comprehension, some suggestions to effectively integrate mind maps and auditory processing are provided.

**Keywords:** Effectiveness, Freshman students, Integration, Listening comprehension, Mind maps

## Introduction

The fourth-year students at UFLS – UD must pass the standardized English proficiency tests namely IELTS, or TOEFL, or Vietnamese Standardized Test of English Proficiency (VSTEP) and submit the university the certificates at a required level so that they can the Bachelor degree and graduate from the university. The VSTEP based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) targets level 3 to level 5 and tests four separate English skills including two receptive skills (reading comprehension and listening comprehension) and two productive skills (writing and speaking). The students at FE, UFLS – UD have to achieve the overall band at level 5 which is equivalent to the level C1 of the CEFR test. At UFLS – UD, the first-year students at FE are exposed to the four-skill practice at the pre-intermediate level.

According to Daneman and Carpenter (1980), it is important to learn listening comprehension in a process of enhancing foreign language proficiency of learners since listening comprehension together with reading comprehension skill provide lexical resources to improve speaking and writing skills. Being aware of the importance of listening comprehension in particular and four English skills in general, language lecturers and students at FE - UFLS often innovate teaching and learning methods and techniques in order to master these language skills. Using mind maps in teaching and learning process has been researched by many linguists, educators and teachers. However, the investigation into the use of this technique in listening



comprehension of UFLS students has not been conducted so far. For the reason above, the article was conducted.

### ***Aims of the Research***

The study aimed to investigate the use of mind maps to enhance listening comprehension of freshman students at Faculty of English, UFLS-UD

### ***Research Questions***

This study was conducted to answer four main research questions as follows:

- Research question 1: What is the frequency of using mind maps in listening comprehension lessons of the first-year students at FE, UFLS – UD?
- Research question 2: At which listening stages do the first-year students use mind maps?
- Research question 3: How effective of using mind maps in listening comprehension lessons? Why or why not?

## **Literature review**

### ***Listening Comprehension***

Field (1998) asserts that hearing comprehension is a difficult-to-describe, imperceptible intellectual activity. It is necessary for listeners to recognize sounds, comprehend language and grammar, and grasp the speaker's primary points so that listeners will be able to recall and comprehend them in the sociocultural context of the speech. Anderson and Lynch (1988) states that understanding what the speaker is saying by hearing is known as listening comprehension. Individuals who are listening play a crucial part in the listening process by applying their own knowledge to analyze what they hear and comprehend the speaker's words. According to Wolvin and Coakley (1985), listening comprehension is also the process by which the auditory organ accesses, interprets, and processes spoken language.

According to Lynch (2010), there are four elements that influence the listening process including the speaker, the listener, the message's content, and visual aids. Since this research relates to drawing mind maps in listening comprehension, the last factor is taken into consideration. Visual aids that include pictures, diagrams, movies, gestures, and body language can improve listener comprehension. Theoretically, hearing comprehension is generally regarded as an active, transparent process in which listeners concentrate on specific elements of the audio input, infer meaning from the passages, and connect what they hear to previously acquired knowledge. Drawing a mind map, EFL students have to use diagrams, or pictures known as visual support which means mind maps does influence the learners' listening process.

### ***Mind Maps in Listening Comprehension for EFL Students***

According to Buzan (2007, p. 103), known as the creator of mind maps, a mind map is “*a creative thinking instrument which reflects natural work brain. A mind map enables the brain to use all pictures and its association in radial design*”. Using mind maps in learning languages in particular has been considered to be effective when mind maps are applied to written material. According to Buzan (2006), learners can use this technique as a visual tool to generate or organize ideas, and take notes. It works by taking information from several sources and displaying this information as key words in a bright, colourful manner. De Porter (2008) also agrees that this technique can help learners originate and extend ideas, and trigger the memory since two hemispheres of brain are activated. In this way, mind maps can help learners draw out their thinking naturally and form an association between ideas and vocabulary. Therefore, EFL students can benefit by making use of mind maps in listening comprehension, for instance, sub-listening skills such as analyzing keywords, scanning for specific words or expression, skimming to get general gist or main ideas of a listening text.

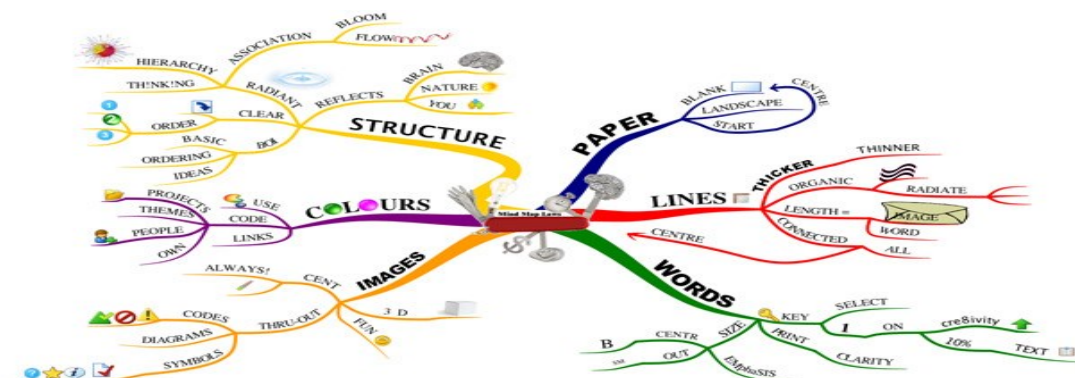


Figure 1: A model mind map  
Retrieved from <http://www.tonybuzan.com/about/mind-mapping/>

It is proved in many studies that using mind maps in listening comprehension lessons at all school levels is effective (Akbarnejad, Gorjian & Nasiri, 2014; Caramiaux, Françoise, Schnell & Bevilacqua, 2014; Koster, van der Wilt, van Kruistum & van der Veen, 2017; Li, 2024). According to Koster, van der Wilt, van Kruistum, and van der Veen (2017), the use of mind maps can indeed enhance listening comprehension and vocabulary of preschoolers. At upper school levels, Akbarnejad, Gorjian, and Nasiri (2014) also stated the efficacy of mind mapping technique on film discussion to improve listening comprehension for EFL students. Another study confirmed the effectiveness of mind maps in listening is conducted by Caramiaux, Françoise, Schnell and Bevilacqua (2014) who conclude that combining mapping techniques with listening can encourage a more interactive and immersive method of sound exploration, encouraging creativity and improving the mental processes related to understanding music. In fact, students tend to have a positive attitude when their teachers use mind maps on teaching listening comprehension in the context of interpreting (Li, 2024). Therefore, it is the researcher's belief that using mind maps in listening comprehension for EFL first-year students at FE, UFLS-UD is also effective.

## Methodology

### Textbooks

There is one official textbook being used for freshman students at FE, UFLS – UD in two semesters which is entitled Pathways 2: Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. It is written by Becky Tarver Chase for General English (GE) B1.1 and B1.3, and published by National Geographic Learning, a part of Cengage Learning. These two courses aim to provide first-year students with language proficiency at CEFR B1 level.

### Participants

Participating in this study were 240 first-year English Translation and Interpreting students at the Faculty of English (FE), UFLS-UD. Their ages fell between eighteen and twenty. While 100 first-year students have been exposed to English since they were 5 or 6 years old, the remaining participants have only been learning the language for 7 years. Of the participants, half have been learning it for 10 years. After completing their first academic school year 2023–2024, they were expected to have attained level 3, which is equivalent to level B1 on the CEFR exam. These students were enrolled in six different classes.

Table 1. First-year EFL students' classes

Time	Classes	Subjects	Textbooks
<b>Semester I</b> August 2023 - January 2024	GE-B1.1-02	GE B1.1	<b>Unit 1 – Unit 5</b> Pathways 2: Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition
	GE-B1.1-05		
	GE-B1.1-09		
<b>Semester II</b>	GE-B1.3-06	GE B1.3	<b>Unit 6 – Unit 10</b>
	GE-B1.3-08		

February 2024 - May 2024	GE-B1.3-07		Pathways 2: Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition
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## ***Research Methods***

The study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to find out the use of mind maps in listening comprehension for freshman EFL students at FE, UFLS-UD.

Each academic year at FE, UFLS – UD has two semesters. There are 15 weeks for each semester. The study follows the data collection procedure which includes the following steps. At the first stage, before semester 1 and semester 2 started, a pre-test was conducted to find out the result of listening comprehension tests. Then, mind maps were introduced to apply into listening comprehension periods during 15 weeks of each semester. During the two semesters, the researcher observed the stages in listening comprehension that first-year students often used mind map which is to answer the second research question. In order to answer the first two research questions, the researcher delivered a set of questionnaires to find out the stages and frequency that first-year students used mind maps in listening comprehension at the end of each semester. Also, the researcher required students to do a post-test to examine the effectiveness of mind maps in enhancing listening comprehension. This is a quasi-experimental method that includes pre- and post-test assessments to answer the last question. The last step would be the use of questionnaires to determine the causes of this inefficiency. The questionnaires were both designed to be both closed and open-ended. In order to provide students with more opportunities to share all their thoughts relevant to the items in the questionnaire, the use of open-ended questions is necessity since they cannot give more ideas on their own to the questions if there are only close-ended ones.

The data collected from questionnaire was qualitatively analyzed to answer the research question 1, 2, and part of question 3. The data from pre and post tests were quantitatively analyzed to find out the effectiveness of using mind maps in listening comprehension skills. After collecting the data, the researcher identified, and grouped them into categories. Then, they are displayed in percentage and illustrated by graphs. Basing on this analysis, the researchers discuss to get findings for discussion in this study.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Frequency of Using Mind Maps in Listening Comprehension***

Figure 2 illustrated the frequency of using mind maps in listening comprehension. There was only 1% always making use of mind maps in listening comprehension, yet a quarter of the respondents rarely utilized this technique. This pie chart also revealed that mind maps were used sometimes by 56% of the respondents which was more than three times higher than those who often used this technique at 18%. The first-year students at FE, UFLS – UD knew they could benefit from this technique in listening comprehension; however, they did not use mind maps very often.

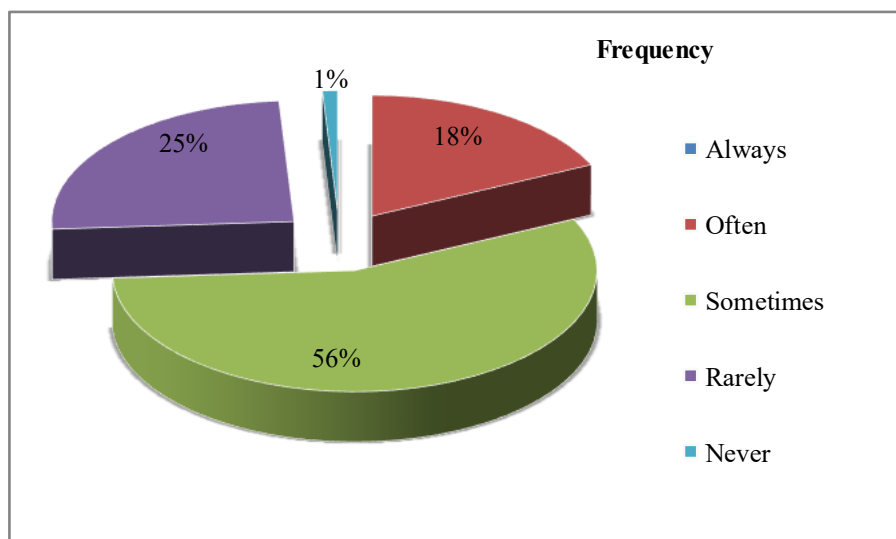


Figure 2. Frequency of using mind maps in listening comprehension

### *Stages of Using Mind Maps in Listening Comprehension*

The pie chart in Figure 3 highlighted the stages of a listening comprehension lesson at which first-year students use mind maps. This technique was mostly taken advantage by EFL students at pre-listening stage at 62.5% due to the data from the questionnaire that before they listened to a text for comprehension, they drew a mind map of vocabulary relating to the theme or topic of the listening text. The second place went to post-listening at 36.25%. After they finished answering all listening questions, they tended to draw a mind map to cover main ideas of what they had listened to and a mind map of vocabulary to easily review for their later listening test. While-listening ranked the last at precisely 1.25%. As the students mentioned, during their time of listening, a mind map was drawn for key words that contained the main ideas or specific information that they had analyzed in listening text. This distribution shows how mind maps are most often used as a tool for pre-listening preparation, with relatively less emphasis placed on their use during and post-listening.

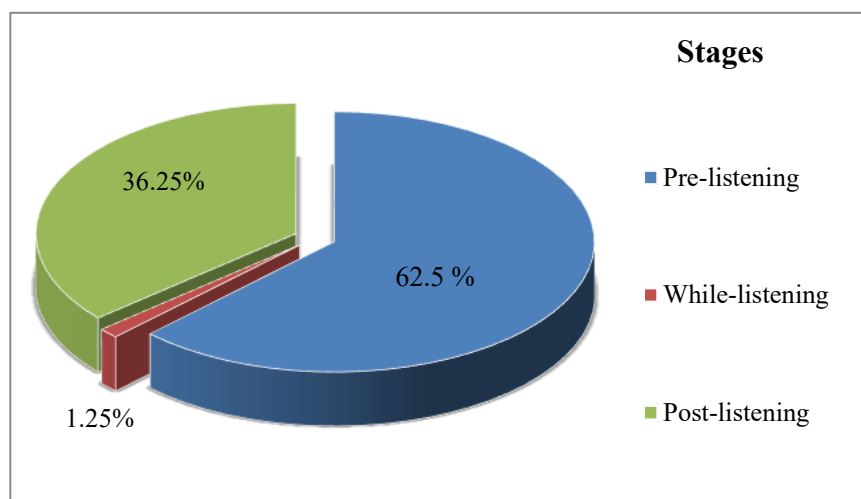


Figure 3. Stages of of using mind maps in listening comprehension

### *Effectiveness of Using Mind Maps in Listening Comprehension*

Table 2 and Table 3 showed the results in terms of mean and paired differences of pre-test and post-test results of listening comprehension, respectively. What can be seen from Table 2 is that the mean value of listening 1 is 6.58 and that of listening 2 is 6.64. Thus, the mean value of listening 2 > listening 1, or the listening comprehension test score after using mind maps is 0.06 higher than before using them.

Table 2: Mean of pre-test and post-test results of listening comprehension

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test results of listening comprehension (Before using mind maps - Listening 1)	6.5779	240	1.13910	.07353
Post-test results of listening comprehension (After using mind maps - Listening 2)	6.6417	240	1.08559	.07007

Table 3 revealed the sig of listening skill  $0.134 > 0.05$  so the researcher refused the hypothesis that is, the average of 2 total of each listening test is equal, proving that there is no difference in the scores of students before and after using mind maps, and therefore there is no significance in the difference of listening comprehension scores through the use of mind maps. It can also be inferred that using mind maps in listening comprehension was not effective as hypothesized.

Table 3: The pair differences of pre-test and post-test results of listening comprehension

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre-test results of listening comprehension (Before using mind maps - Listening 1) - Post-test results of listening comprehension (After using mind maps - Listening 2)	-.06375	.65710	.04242	-.14731	.01981	- 1.503	240	.134

### ***Reasons for Ineffectiveness of Using Mind Maps in Listening Comprehension***

After finding out the opposite results as mentioned in the research hypothesis, another set of questionnaires was handed out to the first-year students to investigate the reasons for this ineffectiveness of mind maps in listening comprehension. There were several reasons namely the length of the listening text, the lack of lexical resource, listening comprehension skill of long listening texts, students' inability to identify main and minor content of a listening text, a lack of flexibility to adapt to spontaneous changes in spoken discourse, time length to draw a mind map, their terrible drawing skill, distraction from listening due to cognitive overload from mind map creation, delays in processing information as students engage with visual organization, and visual overload from complex mind map structures. These obstacles were collected from opened-end questions and the last five reasons including time length to draw a mind map (R1), their terrible drawing skill (R2), distraction from listening due to cognitive overload from mind map creation (R3), delays in processing information as students engage with visual organization (R4), and visual overload from complex mind map structures (R5) were related to the use of mind maps. These five reasons with specific percentages for mind maps' ineffectiveness in listening comprehension were demonstrated clearly in Figure 4.

As can be clearly seen from Figure 4, R3 ranked the top at 42.5% (n=102), which was more than 1.5 times as much as the second highest of R5 at 27.08% (n=65), 2.5 times as compared to the third highest of R4 at

16.67% (n=40), and 3.5 times in comparison with top 4 of R1 at 11.67% (n=28). Apparently, R2 was at the bottom at 2.08% (n=5).

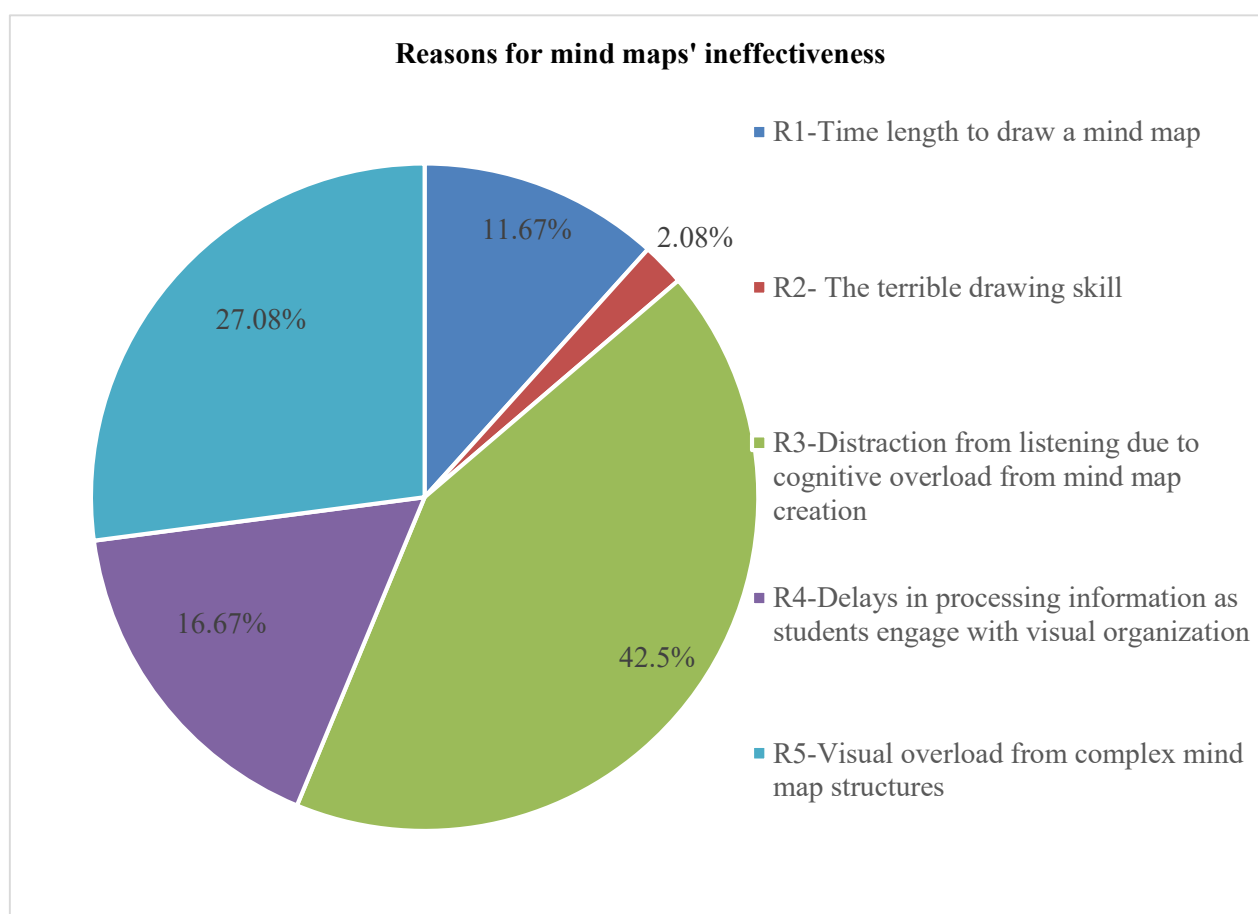


Figure 4. Reasons for mind maps' ineffectiveness in listening comprehension

## Conclusion and suggestions

In conclusion, the research questions about the frequency, listening stages, effectiveness and reasons for ineffectiveness of mind maps in listening comprehension lesson of first-year students at FE, UFLS – UD have been answered in this article. Almost every student was aware of the necessity of mind mapping technique in improve listening comprehension skill; however, they just sometimes used it. Nevertheless, once it was used, students drew mind maps mostly in pre-listening phase to recall or list related-topic vocabulary of a listening text. This technique cannot be a useful one for EFL learners due to the results in the pre- and post-test assessments. The reasons for this could be traced back to difficulties they confronted with when drawing a mind map which were time length to draw a mind map, their terrible drawing skill, distraction from listening due to cognitive overload from mind map creation, delays in processing information as students engage with visual organization, and visual overload from complex mind map structures.

A mind map can be drawn on a piece of paper with different colors; however, students will find it difficult to change and modify the mind map if they make mistakes when drawing. One solution is to simplify the complexity of a mind maps where there is no need to draw pictures or to color the branches.

The paper explores five different reasons why using mind maps is not effective in listening comprehension at FE, UFLS-UD; however, only three out of five have been solved by the simplification of drawing mind maps. The other two reasons should be investigated more to help students improve listening comprehension through the use of mind maps.

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## APPENDIX 1 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET

Date:  
Class:  
Unit:  
Period:  
Textbook:  
Time length:

Stages of mind maps' use in listening comprehension	Pre-listening	
	While-listening	
	Post-listening	
Frequencies of mind maps' use in listening comprehension	Always	
	Often	
	Sometimes	
	Rarely	
	Never	

## APPENDIX 2

### QUESTIONNAIRES

The research focuses on the use of mind maps in listening comprehension classes by first-year students at Faculty of English, University of Foreign Language Studies - The University of Danang. Please cooperate by filling out this questionnaire. Your responses—which you can indicate by checking the relevant boxes—will be very helpful to the research. You may be sure that any feedback you provide will be kept private and utilized exclusively for this research. I appreciate your help.

#### I. Personal questions

1. How old are you?

☐ 20

☐ Under 20

☐ Over 20

2. How long have you learnt English?

☐ 3 years

☐ 7 years

☐ 10 years

☐ More than 10 years

#### II. Questionnaire on using mind maps in listening comprehension classes

1. Do you think it is necessary to use mind maps in listening comprehension?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. How often do you use mind maps in listening comprehension?

☐ Always

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

☐ Others:.....

3. At what stage do you use mind maps in listening comprehension? (more than one answer is possible)

☐ Pre-speaking stage

☐ While- speaking stage

☐ Post- speaking stage

☐ Others:.....

4. In your opinion, using mind maps in listening comprehension is:

☐ Extremely effective

☐ Very effective

☐ Moderately effective

☐ Slightly effective

☐ Not effective at all

☐ Others:.....

5. What are possible causes of the ineffectiveness of using mind maps in listening comprehension? (more than one answer is possible)

☐ Time length to draw a mind map

☐ The terrible drawing skill

☐ Distraction from listening due to cognitive overload from mind map creation

☐ Delays in processing information as students engage with visual organization

☐ Visual overload from complex mind map structures

☐ Others:.....



# Exploring “Attitude” in English Motivational Quotes on Success and Failure: An Appraisal Theory Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

In the realm of motivational discourse, language wields the power to convey perceptions of success and failure. Motivational quotes, particularly those on failure and success, can provide sensible guidance and inspiration needed to reach one's full potential. The concepts of success and failure are pivotal in motivational discourse because they encapsulate the human experience of striving towards goals, facing setbacks, and ultimately achieving personal growth. This study explores the Attitude in such quotes from the perspective of Appraisal Theory by Martin and White's (2005), a framework within Systemic Functional Linguistics focusing on examining the language of evaluation. Utilizing qualitative methods with supplemental quantitative information, we analyze the realization of Attitude in quotes by American authors, using samples from BrainyQuote, a well-regarded repository of quotations known for its extensive and carefully curated collection. Our findings reveal that these quotes predominantly express positive attitudes, even when addressing failure, which is often reframed to inspire perseverance. The category Attitude is semantically analyzed under three domains – Affect, Judgement and Appreciation in which Judgement and Appreciation sources are used more frequently. A wide range of explicit and implicit lexicogrammatical means are employed to realize Attitude in these quotes. Especially, the use of rhetorical appraisal helps to effectively attract and persuade the audience. It is hoped that this study can offer an insight into the evaluative language of motivational discourse, which can be useful for English teaching and learning as well as translation.

**Keywords:** “Attitude”, Quotes on success and failure, Appraisal framework, Lexico-grammatical means, Evaluative language.

## Introduction

Motivational quotes on success and failure serve as succinct expressions of wisdom, encapsulating key aspects of human effort, resilience, and the pursuit of goals. These quotes, often attributed to notable public figures, inspire and encourage individuals to persist through challenges while fostering a deeper understanding of success and failure. For instance:

- (a) Success is usually the culmination of controlling failure. (Sylvester Stallone)
- (b) It's not necessary to fear the prospect of failure but to be determined not to fail. (Jimmy Carter)
- (c) Once you can accept failure, you can have fun and success. (Rickey Henderson)

These succinct and powerful phrases; especially coming from famous people whose ethos, authority and credibility can appeal to their audiences (Tumasang, 2022), certainly inspire people to persevere through challenges, embrace failure as a learning opportunity, and celebrate the victories along the way. By reflecting on these quotes, people of all ages can find the motivation to keep pushing forward, regardless of the hurdles we face, and gain a deeper understanding of what it truly means to succeed. In order to persuade audiences, speakers must use discourse strategies including expressing evaluative attitudes about success and failure. Therefore, examining the language of “Attitude” is of practical significance.

“Attitude” is one of the three main subsystems of Appraisal Theory by Martin and White (2005), a framework within Systemic Functional Linguistics expressing interpersonal functions. Attitude is realized in the motivational quotes to position and persuade the readers to accept the author’s evaluation. Understanding the language of “Attitude” in English also serves as a foundation for English teaching and learning as well as translation.

The study aims to answer the following research questions.

- (1) What are semantic features of Attitude in English motivational quotes on success and failure?
- (2) What lexicogrammatical realizations of Attitude can be found in English motivational quotes on success and failure?

## Theoretical background

### *Appraisal theory*

Appraisal Theory, developed by Martin and White (2005), offers an interpersonal meaning resource that operates at the discourse-semantic level, focusing on how language extends beyond the clause to convey evaluative meaning in context, and it examines “meanings in context and rhetorical effects”, (Martin & White, 2005, p.94). It explores how language reflects and influences our emotional responses, evaluations, and interpersonal relationships. It categorizes the ways we express attitudes, judgments, and emotional states through three key systems, namely Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation (See Figure 1). Attitude covers emotional reactions and evaluations of people and things. Engagement addresses the degree of alignment or opposition towards different viewpoints. Graduation adjusts the intensity or scope of these evaluations. By analyzing these elements, Appraisal Theory provides insights into how language shapes social interactions and personal expressions, offering a framework for understanding the nuanced ways individuals convey and interpret meaning. This study focuses more on Attitude to answer the research questions.

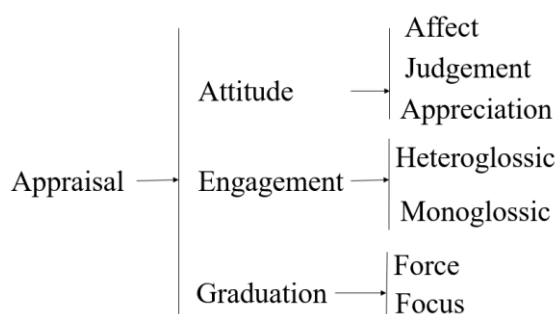


Figure 1: Appraisal framework

Source: Martin, J. R., White, P. R. R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*, Palgrave, London, pp.38

### *Attitude*

In Appraisal Theory, Martin and White (2005) delineate three key domains within the broader concept of “Attitude,” which shapes how individuals evaluate and express their responses to experiences and phenomena. “Affect” pertains to the emotional responses people have, encompassing feelings, namely Happiness, Inclination, Security, and Satisfaction. “Judgement” involves the evaluation of people's character or behavior based on moral or ethical standards, including Normality (how unusual someone is), Capacity (how capable they are), Tenacity (how resolute they are), Veracity (how truthful someone is), and Propriety (how ethical someone is). “Appreciation” refers to the evaluation of objects, processes, or experiences, focusing on their aesthetic or functional value, including Reaction, Composition, and

Valuation. Together, these domains help to frame how attitudes influence communication and interpretation in various contexts.

“Attitude” can be explicit or implicit with both positive and negative meanings. Lexicogrammatical realizations of explicit Attitude include lexical items such as verb groups of emotion and judgement, adverbs and attributive adjectives, noun groups and nominalization. Implicit Attitude is realized via rhetorical devices such as similes, metaphors, hyperboles, semantic infusion with repetition and intensification.

## ***Literature review***

Appraisal theory has attracted a worldwide following. The Appraisal framework has been applied to explore the evaluative aspect of language in a wide range of genres. It is worth mentioning a number of appraisal framework-based studies, especially in motivational discourses such as Hai-bi Wu (2021), Millar & Hunston (2015), Xinxin (2016), Su (2016), Zaidi and White (2021), etc. Especially, Xinxin (2016) and Su (2016) both investigate Positive Discourse Analysis through the lens of the Appraisal Theory in distinct contexts. Xinxin (2016) analyzes Attitude on three levels of Affect, Judgement, and Appreciation in Chinese economic articles, in which Appreciation was used with the highest frequency. This study highlights how language constructs positive attitudes and reinforces economic ideologies. Similarly, Su (2016) analyzed the positively evaluative language in President Xi Jinping’s speech at the National University of Singapore on three levels of Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. The findings show that many positive values in the speech were used to build a positive image of leadership, international relations, and motivate listeners. Both studies emphasize the strategic use of language in fostering positive sentiments; however, it is necessary to examine how language of evaluation is realized in the English motivational quotes as a kind of motivational discourse to shape the public perception, particularly in terms of success and failure.

The exploration of motivational quotes has also garnered significant scholarly attention, as demonstrated by various studies. Afdhalina and Ayu (2022) investigated the mood in motivational quotes on Instagram Reels, revealing how linguistic choices in these short texts influence emotional responses and audience engagement. Their study highlights the prevalence of positive moods, which play a critical role in enhancing motivational appeal. Similarly, Kawa (2020) conducted a Cognitive Positive Discourse Analysis of English motivational speeches, emphasizing the strategic use of language to evoke cognitive and emotional responses that reinforce positive thinking and self-motivation. Kawa’s research provides a broader understanding of how motivational discourse functions cognitively, which complements the findings of Afdhalina and Ayu. Tumasang (2022) offered a rhetorical appraisal of motivational quotes on social media, focusing on how these quotes persuade and motivate audiences through rhetorical strategies such as ethos, pathos, and logos. This rhetorical perspective enriches the discussion by examining the effectiveness of motivational quotes beyond their linguistic content. In addition, Widiastuti and Rahayuni (2024) examined the interpersonal functions of English motivational quotes and their Indonesian translations, providing insights into how cultural contexts influence the reception and impact of motivational language. These studies underscore the multifaceted nature of motivational quotes, examining them from linguistic, cognitive, rhetorical, and cultural perspectives. However, a study on Attitude in quotes by famous people in the light of Appraisal Theory is essential to contribute to the comprehensive picture of language choice in motivational discourse.

## **Methodology**

### ***Method***

This study employs a qualitative research approach, with supplementary quantitative analysis to address the research questions. The qualitative data consist of written discourse in the form of

motivational quotes on success and failure. The study applies the Appraisal Theory framework by Martin and White (2005) to analyze semantic features and lexicogrammatical realizations of Attitude.

### ***Data collection***

The source of the data collection is BrainyQuote website, a well-regarded repository of quotations known for its extensive and carefully curated collection. This site is constantly updated with a number of quotes on different topics; however, for ease of data management and comparison, 100 motivational quotes on success and 100 motivational quotes on failure have been taken from Success and Failure sub-sections on the site. Criteria for sample selection include (1) only collected quotes from famous American celebrities, athletes, politicians, and authors; and (2) only collected quotes in the form of sentence unit. The subjective nature of these quotes allows for a clear analysis of evaluative language for motivation.

### **Data analysis**

The study is based mostly on Appraisal framework by Martin and White (2005), with the objective of analyzing the semantic features and lexicogrammatical realizations of Attitude in the English motivational quotes on success and failure. In detail, the study attempts to examine how Attitude and are realized, established, sourced, and targeted; therefore, discourse semantics is considered since the realizations of an attitude tends to spread over a phase of conversation, regardless of grammatical limits, and via a range of grammatical categories or grammatical metaphor, a certain attitude can be realized.

Qualitative analysis was conducted using discourse semantics and the Appraisal framework. Quantitative analysis was performed using statistical calculations, which provided a numerical overview of the frequency and distribution of different Attitude categories within the motivational quotes.

## **Results**

### ***Semantic features of Attitude in English motivational quotes on success and failure***

Noticeably, the findings reveal that the quotes predominantly express positive attitudes, even when addressing failure, which is often reframed to inspire perseverance. Most quotes on success and failure serve as tools for reflection, encouraging people to embrace challenges, learn from mistakes, and maintain a forward-looking mindset. Table 1 and Table 2 illustrate the distribution of Attitude in terms of semantic subcategories and mode as expression.

Table 1: Distribution of Implicit Attitude and Explicit Attitude in the quotes on success and failure

	<b>Explicit Attitude</b>	<b>Implicit Attitude</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Success quotes</b>	59%	41%	100%
<b>Failure quotes</b>	51%	49%	100%

Table 2: Distribution of the three subcategories of Attitude in the quotes on success and failure

	<b>Affect</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Appreciation</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Success quotes</b>	17%	38%	45%	100%
<b>Failure quotes</b>	11%	41%	48%	100%

As can be seen from Table 1, in the quotes on success and failure, the percentage of explicit Attitude sources is a little higher than the implicit Attitude sources (59% vs 41%; 51% vs 49%). In addition, Table 2 shows that the quotes on success and failure see a similar pattern in how Attitudes are distributed, which is more associated with Judgment and Appreciation. The analysis of semantic features of Attitude is presented as follows.

## *Semantic features of Affect*

Affect expresses emotions such as joy, happiness, or anxiety, suffering of the subject when perceiving or being affected by a specific object or event. In the quotes on success, Affect is involved in the speakers' positive emotional responses to success. Consider the following examples:

- (1) There is little success where there is little **laughter**. (Andrew Carnegie)
- (2) The size of your success is measured by the strength of your **desire**; the size of your dream; and how you handle disappointment along the way. (Robert Kiyosaki)
- (3) Find something you're **passionate** about and keep tremendously interested in it. (Julia Child)
- (4) If you **love** what you are doing, you will be successful. (Albert Schweitzer)
- (5) Success is getting what you **want**. Happiness is wanting what you get. (Dale Carnegie)

In the provided motivational quotes, the use of Affect is prominent in conveying emotions that inspire action and reflection. In Example (1), Affect of Happiness is expressed through the emotion of joy (laughter) being tied to success, and it indicates that happiness and success are interconnected. In Example (2), Affect of Inclination is illustrated in the “strength of your **desire**” and “how you handle **disappointment**,” emphasizing the emotional resilience required for success. Quote (3) highlights positive Affect by focusing on passion and interest as driving forces, which encourage an emotional engagement with one's pursuits. Similarly, Example (4) connects love with success to imply that positive emotions lead to positive outcomes. In Example (5), Affect is evident in the comparison of success and happiness, framing contentment as a crucial emotional state that defines true success. Overall, these quotes leverage all subtypes of Affect to emphasize the emotional dimensions of motivation and achievement.

Despite a negligible proportion of Affect sources in the quotes of failure, the use of Affect reveals the speakers' emotional responses to the concept of failure. For example:

- (6) I've come to believe that all my past failure and frustration were actually laying the foundation for the understandings that have created the new level of living I now **enjoy**. (Tony Robbins)
- (7) I **wasn't afraid** to fail. Something good always comes out of failure. (Anne Baxter)
- (8) **Don't be afraid** of missing opportunities. Behind every failure is an opportunity somebody wishes they had missed. (Lily Tomlin)
- (9) Do not let your **ambitions** become a sanctuary for your failures. (Bryant H. McGill)
- (10) I **hate** to be a failure. I **hate** and **regret** the failure of my marriages. I would **gladly** give all my millions for just one lasting marital **success**. (J. Paul Getty)

Tony Robbins (Example 6) and Anne Baxter (Example 7) employ positive Affect by framing failure as a stepping stone to success, suggesting an emotional shift from frustration to gratitude. Lily Tomlin (Example 8) uses Affect to convey a cautionary tone, which subtly indicates fear and regret associated with missed opportunities. In contrast, Example 9 and Example 10 express negative Affect—McGill's quote emphasizes the danger of failure overwhelming ambition, while Getty explicitly conveys hatred and deep regret for his failures, particularly in his personal life. Although there are obviously negative emotions about failure, it serves as a reminder to people not to get caught up in similar situations, so these quotes still significantly inspire the audiences.

## *Semantic features of Judgment*

Judgment presents an attitude of commenting on a behavior, and is divided into 5 subcategories of “Normality, Capacity, Tenacity, Veracity, and Propriety”. In the quotes of success, most Judgment sources tend towards “Capacity and Tenacity”. Especially, “success” itself represents a positive meaning about someone's capacity. Take following quotes as examples:

- (11) The foundation stones for a balanced success are **honesty**, character, **integrity**, **faith**, love and **loyalty**. (Zig Ziglar)
- (12) The price of success is **hard work**, **dedication** to the job at hand, and the **determination** that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand. (Vince Lombardi)
- (13) A successful man is one who **can lay a firm foundation** with the bricks others have thrown at him. (David Brinkley)
- (14) **Think twice** before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another. (Napoleon Hill)

In these examples, Judgement is employed to evaluate human behavior and character traits that contribute to success. The quotes emphasize positive moral and personal qualities such as “honesty, integrity, faith, and loyalty” (Example 11), and “hard work, dedication, and determination” (Example 12). Similarly, Example (13) indicates positive Judgement of Capacity and Tenacity respectively as a key to success. These quotes use Judgement to appraise not just actions but also the inherent qualities that define a person’s character, framing them as essential for achieving success. The authors implicitly evaluate people who embody these virtues as admirable and worthy of success.

Similarly, the use of Judgement is evident as the speakers evaluate and assess human behavior and character in relation to failure. Look at the following examples:

- (15) You always **pass** failure on your way to success. (Mickey Rooney)
- (16) If you're doing your **best**, you won't have any time to worry about failure. (H. Jackson Brown)
- (17) My **fault**, my **failure**, is not in the passions I have, but in my **lack of control** of them. (Jack Kerouac)
- (18) One's only rival is one's own potentialities. One's only failure is failing to live up to one's own possibilities. In this sense, every man can be **a king**, and must therefore be treated like a king. (Abraham Maslow)

In Example (15), Mickey Rooney’s statement reflects a positive Judgement of perseverance to reveal that encountering failure is an inevitable part of success, and thus, a commendable aspect of one’s journey. Example (16) expresses Judgement by emphasizing diligence; doing one’s best is framed as a moral obligation that leaves no room for worry, implicitly judging inaction or worry as a failure. Example (17) demonstrates self-reflection and self-critique, which is a form of negative Judgement directed towards the self, due to the lack of control over passions. Finally, Abraham Maslow (Example 18) judges the potential within every individual. In this sense, failure is framed as a shortfall in realizing one’s possibilities, while simultaneously promoting a positive assessment of individual potential as something akin to royalty.

### Semantic features of Appreciation

Appreciation is used to evaluate and assess abstract qualities related to success, including Reaction, Composition, and Valuation. The findings reveal that Appreciation of Valuation is the most popular. Consider the following examples:

- (19) Education is the key to success in life, and teachers make a lasting impact in the lives of their students. (Solomon Ortiz)
- (20) Success is best when it's shared. (Howard Schultz)
- (21) The key to success is to get out into the store and listen to what the associates have to say. (Sam Walton)
- (22) Sustainability is the key to our survival on this planet and will also determine success on all levels. (Shari Arison)

Through these examples, Appreciation is used to recognize and evaluate key elements that contribute to success, underscoring their importance in various contexts. In Example 19, Appreciation is employed to elevate education and the role of teachers. Accordingly, their significant and enduring impact on students’

lives is acknowledged. Howard Schultz (Example 20) highlights the intrinsic value of shared success, implying that success is more meaningful when it benefits others. Sam Walton (Example 21) positions communication and listening within the retail environment as essential for achieving success. In Example 22, the use of Appreciation of Valuation frames sustainability as a determinant of success on all levels.

Appreciation is also employed to positively evaluate failure.

- (23) An essential aspect of creativity is not being afraid to fail. (Edwin Land)
- (24) Failure is a detour, not a dead-end street. (Zig Ziglar)
- (25) Failure is a part of success. (Hank Aaron)
- (26) Failure holds the seeds for greatness - so long as you water those seeds with introspection, they can be the root of your success. (Daniel Lubetzky)

Appreciation of Valuation is the main meaning when evaluating the failure. The main purpose of these quotes reveal that failure is appreciated not as a negative outcome, but as a necessary and valuable step toward growth, creativity, and eventual success. Therefore, these quotes transmit positive energy and motivation to the audiences.

### *Lexicogrammatical realizations of Attitude in English motivational quotes on success and failure*

Realizations of Attitude were documented regarding lexical instantiations and frequency of lexical instantiations, as well as grammatical realizations. In detail, explicit Attitude was realized via a range of lexical resources including verb groups, noun groups, adjective groups, noun, verb, adjective, adverb, which facilitates the effectiveness of assessment. Among them, noun groups and Verb groups are used more frequently in order to conceptualize success and failure. In addition, comparatives and superlative are used to emphasize the characteristics of the phenomenon.

- (27) Success is **sweeter and sweeter** if long delayed and gotten through many struggles and defeats. (Amos Bronson Alcott)
- (28) Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is **more important** than any other. (Abraham Lincoln)
- (29) The **most important** single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people. (Theodore Roosevelt)
- (30) Our **best successes** often come after our greatest disappointments. (Henry Ward Beecher)
- (31) It is not a disgrace to fail. Failing is one of **the greatest arts** in the world. (Charles Kettering)

Regarding the realizations of implicit Attitude, as suggested by Martin and White (2005, p. 64-65), similes and lexical metaphors are two resources falling under the umbrella of figurative language to provoke. The results showed that only some subtypes of Attitude – like the Affect of Un/Happiness, Judgement of Capacity and Tenacity, and Appreciation Valuation – were subject to these rhetorical devices. Table 3 illustrates realizations of types of implicit Attitude.

Table 3: Realization of types of implicit Attitude

Realizations	Attitude types	Examples of implicit Attitude
Figurative language/ Similes	Appreciation of Valuation	(32) <b>Success is like death.</b> The more successful you become, the higher the houses in the hills get and the higher the fences get. (Kevin Spacey)
Figurative language/ Lexical metaphor	Appreciation of Valuation Affect of Un/Happiness	(33) Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor. (Truman Capote) (34) I fell off my pink cloud with a thud. (Elizabeth Taylor)

The use of rhetorical appraisal helps to deepen the impact of the messages. In example (32), a simile is employed by comparing success to death, highlighting its isolating nature and the increasing separation from others, symbolized by “higher houses” and “higher fences”. Truman Capote’s quote in Example (33) uses metaphor by comparing failure to a “condiment” that enhances the “flavor” of success, emphasizing the idea that success is more meaningful when preceded by failure. Elizabeth Taylor’s statement in Example (34) employs imagery and metaphor with the phrase “fell off my pink cloud with a thud,” which vividly illustrates a sudden and harsh transition from happiness or illusion to reality. These devices make the concepts of success and failure more relatable and impactful.

In addition, Intensification of degree or process, and infused manner lexical items are two other main resources for flagging Attitude. In other words, these two resources are analogous to the Intensification resources, where the Semantic Infusion strategy is represented by the infused manner lexical items, the Isolated Lexemes or Repetition tactics are represented by the other.

- (35) Every adversity, every failure, every heartache carries with it the seed of an equal or greater benefit. (Napoleon Hill)
- (36) To be successful, you have to have your heart in your business and your business in your heart. (Thomas J. Watson)
- (37) Success is not built on success. It's built on failure. It's built on frustration. Sometimes it is built on catastrophe. (Sumner Redstone)
- (38) There are people who make things happen, there are people who watch things happen, and there are people who wonder what happened. To be successful, you need to be a person who makes things happen. (Jim Lovell)

The usage of comparable recurring constructions in a speech is known as parallelism. In some cases, parallelism is also repetition. It facilitates persuading listeners and ensuring the ideas flow easily. This tactic is used by public speakers to persuade audiences, ensure that their thoughts flow naturally, and provide more rhythm and balance to their arguments.

## Discussion

The study examines the Attitude in 200 motivational quotes on success and failures from the perspective of Appraisal Theory by Martin and White’s (2005). Appraisal framework expands on the idea of interpersonal meaning by examining the construction and negotiation of social interactions. The deployment of Attitude in such quotes was investigated from two perspectives: (1) the semantic features of Attitude, and (2) the lexicogrammatical realizations of Attitude.

Regarding Attitude types in the English motivational quotes of success and failure, Judgement and Appreciation were more frequently deployed than Affect although the proportion of Appreciation was a little higher than that of Judgement. The proportion of Judgement was large as most motivation quotes are to show positive attitudes of appraising participants toward particular behaviors of appraised entities to achieve success or come over setbacks. Of the subcategories of Judgement, capacity and tenacity resources accounted for the biggest proportion. It stems from the fact that motivational quotes urge people to act. This finding is in the same vein as Su (2016), Xinxin (2016), and Hai-bi Wu (2021) mentioning the nature of positive discourse which aims at gaining persuasive success. In addition, Hai-bi Wu (2021) also explained that as the appraisal system is closely concerned with the ideological and cultural values, it is impossible to be fully objective in the attitudinal analysis.

Appreciation mostly evaluates features causing emotional reaction of things or phenomena, quality of participants; importance, harm or benefits of a particular entity. This can explain the high proportion of Appreciation since success and failure are considered as phenomena, or events, and inspirational influencers tend to reframe the concepts of these objects. Meanwhile, Affect is deployed the least although it is realized in all semantic subdomains. This is because in such kinds of motivational quotes as discourses, assessments are derived from analyzing the state of an issue, so only in some cases do authors describe



emotional responses to success and failure. Especially, most Attitude are positive, which reflects the nature and the purpose of motivational quotes, and this finding shares the same line with that of Afdhalina and Ayu (2022), Kawa (2020), Tumasang (2022), Widiastuti and Rahayuni (2024).

Regarding the explicitness, the proportions of explicit Attitude instances were a bit higher than implicit instances since implicit Judgement accounted for a significant percentage. The result is in line with those done by Su (2016), Xinxin (2016), Zaidi and White (2021), and it is consistent with what Martin and White (2005) explained that one subtype of Attitude assessment “Appreciation” can be used to invoke another subtypes “Judgement” or “Affect”, so this is a mean to realize implicit Attitude. The use of implicit Attitude values which are realized by semantic shift, ideational meanings can make it much easier for writers to express their subjective attitude and position readers to take their communication target; as a result, increasing the persuasiveness of the quotes.

Attitude is realized via a wide range of lexicogrammatical resources including words, groups and sentences. Among them, verb groups, and noun groups are the main means. In addition, rhetorical devices such as similes, metaphor are utilized to realize implicit Attitude. Motivational influencers attempt to influence the cognition of their audience. They also try to repeat some words and expressions purposefully to attract audiences’ attention. Moreover, the majority of the parallel structures provided are positive ones. This result is similar to Kawa’s (2020) and Tusamang’s (2022) which reveal that quotations are structurally and semantically constructed to affect the mind, cognition and attitudes of the audiences.

## **Implication**

The study results have significant implications for higher education institutions, particularly in the areas of language teaching and learners motivation. Educators can help learners develop resilience and perseverance by including motivational quotes emphasizing positive attitudes toward success and failure into the curriculum. The use of motivational discourse in English language teaching provides a practical and engaging way to illustrate evaluative language; therefore, learners in general and postgraduates in particular can gain deep insights into dimensions of Appraisal theory. Furthermore, encouraging learners to analyze and translate such quotes could strengthen their linguistic and critical thinking skills, fostering a personal growth and a personal academic progress.

## **Conclusion**

This study investigates the significant role of Attitude in English motivational quotes on success and failure, as a powerful tool in shaping perceptions and inspiring perseverance. By applying Appraisal Theory by Martin and White (2005), the study has demonstrated how American authors predominantly employ positive evaluative language, even when addressing themes of failure. The more frequent use of Judgement and Appreciation - two subdomains of Attitude, along with a range of rhetorical devices, underscores the effectiveness of these quotes in engaging and motivating audiences. These insights into the evaluative language of motivational discourse not only deepen our understanding of how such language functions but also hold practical implications for English teaching, learning, and translation.

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#### **Data Sources**

<https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/failure-quotes>  
<https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/success-quotes>

# Constructing Performance Indicators for University-Industry Collaboration Research and Development in Universities of Science and Technology in Taiwan

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## ABSTRACT

In the new global economy, government policies promote industrial upgrading. Innovation is critical to productivity, making university-industry collaboration essential in Taiwan, where research personnel are primarily in academia. This collaboration facilitates knowledge transfer, innovation, and problem-solving. This study aims to enhance research capabilities and effectiveness at universities of science and technology in Taiwan. Objectives include understanding current collaboration models, constructing performance evaluation indicators, and analyzing their importance. The research questions are: (1) What are the current models of university-industry collaboration in Taiwan? (2) What are the key performance indicators for these collaborations? and (3) How important are these indicators for practical assessment? The study uses semi-structured interviews with 8 participants, including university-industry collaboration directors, professors, and industry representatives. Interviews will be recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using ATLAS.ti software. Triangulation will be employed to verify findings. Research ethics will be strictly followed, ensuring anonymity and obtaining informed consent from all participants. Preliminary findings indicate that collaborations are evolving toward more diverse and in-depth models to bridge the gap between academia and industry. The establishment of performance indicators for university-industry collaboration has yet to be defined in current academic research. Research suggests that logical framework analysis (LFA) can construct these performance indicators. The findings will serve as a reference for policymakers, university administrators, and corporate departments to improve collaboration and drive innovation.

**Keywords:** Performance indicators; research and development; technical and vocational education; university-industry collaboration; University of Science and Technology

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background

The global economic landscape has significantly shifted due to international political dynamics and the COVID-19 pandemic, accelerating industrial automation and digitization trends, particularly under Industry 4.0. Taiwan's government has implemented technological policies and university-industry collaboration (UIC) programs to boost R&D capabilities and national productivity (National Development Council, 2021). Mastering key technologies and fostering innovation are now critical for enhancing total factor productivity (TFP) (Hall et al., 2010). With advanced research personnel concentrated in academic institutions, establishing effective UIC mechanisms has become essential for aligning research with industrial needs. Societal expectations have grown for universities to capitalize on knowledge and apply research outcomes to meet economic and societal demands (Jiang, 2009). In this context, Taiwan's "Higher Education Sprout Project" encourages universities to align their resources with national priorities and deepen UIC efforts, highlighting the importance of UIC and R&D in the future development of higher education (Ministry of Education, 2022).

### 1.2 Research Motivation

Taiwan's higher education system is divided into general and technical-vocational education, with this study focusing on the National Universities of Science and Technology within the technical-vocational sector. Historically, technical-vocational education has provided skilled human resources and supported

economic development. As digital technologies advance, this system has increasingly emphasized cultivating highly trained professionals who drive industrial growth and innovation. However, the technical-vocational system faces challenges in R&D capabilities, lagging behind general higher education in technology transfer effectiveness and institutional support (Geng et al., 2009).

Despite these challenges, the National Universities of Science and Technology show significant potential with their stronger research focus and resources. These institutions often outperform private technical institutes in research output, funding, and overall competitiveness (Chen et al., 2009). The study targets these universities to explore and enhance their role in university-industry collaboration. By constructing a performance evaluation framework for UIC, the research aims to provide insights that can help policymakers, university administrators, and corporate stakeholders improve the efficiency and effectiveness of R&D, ultimately contributing to national industrial development and innovation (Yang & Liu, 2022; Jiang, 2009).

### **1.3 Research Questions**

To achieve the objectives above, this study will address the following core research questions:

#### ***What are the existing UIC models in Taiwan?***

The study will investigate and analyze the UIC models the National Universities of Science and Technology adopted. Specifically, it will focus on the characteristics of different collaboration models, such as the scope of collaboration, the roles of participants, and the depth and breadth of cooperation. This will help identify the positioning of National Universities of Science and Technology within UIC and assess the impact of these collaboration models on the technical-vocational education system.

#### ***What are the key performance indicators for these collaborations?***

Identifying and evaluating the key performance indicators that influence the success of UIC at National Universities of Science and Technology is a central goal of this study. The research will explore which indicators effectively measure the quality of collaboration, the outcomes' applicability, and the partnerships' sustainability. Additionally, these indicators will cover aspects such as risk management, resource allocation, and the effectiveness of knowledge transfer during the collaboration process.

#### ***How important are these indicators for practical assessment?***

The study will prioritize the identified performance indicators and analyze their practical significance. This includes examining the importance of each indicator across different collaboration models and assessing their contributions to enhancing collaboration effectiveness, promoting industrial development, and supporting policy formulation.

### **1.4 Research Methodology and Design**

This study uses semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method to address the research questions. Participants will include directors of UIC offices, professors involved in UIC activities, and industry representatives from the National Universities of Science and Technology. The interview questions, developed from a literature review and research questions, will explore current UIC models' characteristics and challenges.

The interview data will be transcribed and analyzed using ATLAS.ti software, which will assist in coding and identifying key themes. This analysis will employ open, axial, and selective coding to refine core concepts and develop a performance evaluation system for UIC effectiveness. To ensure the credibility and validity of findings, the study will use triangulation by comparing data from interviews, literature reviews,

and field observations. Ethical guidelines will be followed, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring anonymity, and securing data confidentiality.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Foundations of University-Industry Collaboration**

#### ***Definition and Significance of University-Industry Collaboration***

University-industry collaboration is the interactive model between universities and industries to promote knowledge and technology transfer. This collaboration is characterized by cross-organizational relationships involving the exchange of both tangible resources (such as funding, materials, and equipment) and intangible resources (such as technology and data) (Perkmann et al., 2013). The motivation behind UIC often includes organizational goals—universities focus on academic publications while industries aim to solve technical problems. However, both parties may also share common objectives, such as addressing societal issues (Airoto, 2001; Koka & Prescott, 2002; Ankrah & AL-Tabbaa, 2015). UIC plays a critical role in enhancing national innovation systems by facilitating the flow and application of technology-related knowledge across sectors, thereby driving economic development (Mgonja, 2017; Inzelt, 2004; Perkmann et al., 2011).

#### ***Development of University-Industry Collaboration***

Promoting UIC has become vital for fostering innovation and economic growth in a globally competitive environment. Countries like the United States and Japan have implemented policies and legislation to encourage collaboration between academia and industry. For instance, the Bayh-Dole Act in the United States allowed universities to own and manage patents resulting from government-funded research, significantly boosting UIC activities (Mowery & Sampat, 2004a). Similar legislation in Japan and Taiwan has facilitated university technology transfer and commercialization (Li Kunhuang, 2016).

#### ***Types of University-Industry Collaboration***

UIC can take various forms, from research support and collaborative research to knowledge and technology transfer (Santoro & Gopalakrishnan, 2000). These forms highlight how resources and expertise are shared between universities and industries, each contributing differently to the innovation process.

### **2.2 Development of UIC in Taiwan's Technical and Vocational Education System**

#### ***Technical and Vocational Education and UIC***

Taiwan's technical and vocational education system (TVET) has been instrumental in transforming the country from an agrarian economy to a high-knowledge, technology-intensive industry. Given that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) dominate Taiwan's industrial landscape, they often lack the resources for extensive R&D. As a result, UIC has become a crucial strategy for SMEs to access the research capabilities of universities, thereby driving technological innovation and industrial upgrading (Zhang Guobao, 2006).

#### ***Government Policies Supporting UIC***

The Taiwanese government has played a significant role in promoting UIC, particularly within the TVET system. Various ministries, including the Ministry of Education and the National Science Council (NSC), have implemented policies and provided funding to encourage UIC. For example, the NSC's initiatives, like the "Industry-Academia Collaboration Projects," aim to link university research with industrial needs, facilitating the transfer of cutting-edge technologies to the market.

## 2.3 Performance Evaluation of University-Industry Collaboration

University-industry collaborations are pivotal in driving innovation, enhancing research capabilities, and contributing to economic development. Evaluating the performance of these collaborations involves a comprehensive understanding of the critical factors that influence success, the frameworks used for assessment, and the specific performance indicators that can be applied to measure effectiveness.

### *Influencing Factors in UIC*

The success of university-industry collaborations depends on several critical factors. Compatibility between partners is essential, as aligned strategic goals, complementary expertise, and mutual understanding of capabilities enable efficient collaboration. Trust is another crucial element, fostering open communication and reducing risks, especially in the early stages of the partnership (Perkmann et al., 2013; Ankrah & AL-Tabbaa, 2015; Boardman & Ponomariov, 2009).

Effective communication and coordination are vital for maintaining alignment with project objectives. Regular communication channels, such as meetings and shared tools, help prevent misunderstandings and ensure smooth project progress. Clear roles and responsibilities are also necessary to manage the complexities of collaborative projects (Klofsten & Jones-Evans, 2000; Giuliani et al., 2010). Adequate resource commitment from both parties is vital to driving collaboration forward. This includes financial support, skilled personnel, and access to advanced research facilities, which enhance R&D capabilities. Such commitments signal the seriousness of both partners in achieving their goals (Siegel et al., 2003; Franco & Haase, 2015).

Finally, setting clear objectives and performance metrics is critical for guiding the collaboration and evaluating success. Measurable goals, accompanied by performance indicators like joint publications, patents, and innovation impact, help keep the partnership on track and ensure it delivers tangible results (Laursen et al., 2011; Santoro & Gopalakrishnan, 2000).

### *Evaluation Framework for UIC Performance*

Evaluating university-industry collaboration performance can be effectively done using several established frameworks. The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is one such framework, assessing organizational performance across four perspectives: Financial, Customer, Internal Processes, and Learning and Growth. In UICs, BSC can measure financial returns, partner satisfaction, process efficiency, and the development of new knowledge, offering a comprehensive evaluation of both tangible and intangible outcomes (Kaplan & Norton, 1992).

The Logical Framework Approach (LFA), developed by USAID, is another valuable tool for planning, monitoring, and evaluating UICs. It breaks down a project into objectives, outputs, activities, and inputs, helping to define goals, expected outcomes, and necessary resources clearly. LFA also emphasizes risk management by identifying critical assumptions affecting collaboration success (Gaspar, 2000; Sartorius, 1991).

The Kirkpatrick Model, typically used for educational programs, also applies to UICs. It evaluates at four levels: Reaction, Learning, Behavior, and Results. This model can assess participant feedback, knowledge gained, practical application, and overall outcomes, providing a comprehensive view of UIC effectiveness from start to finish (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). These frameworks allow for a multi-level assessment of UICs, ensuring that both processes and outcomes are thoroughly evaluated and helping to identify areas for continuous improvement.

### ***Proposed Performance Metrics for Evaluating UICs***

This study proposes a set of performance metrics tailored to assess university-industry collaborations (UICs) at the National Universities of Science and Technology in Taiwan. These metrics aim to capture the diverse outcomes of UICs, including innovation, economic impact, and academic contributions.

*Innovation Outputs:* Key indicators include the number of patents filed, new products or processes developed, and the technology transfer and commercialization rate. These metrics assess the collaboration's direct contributions to technological advancement and intellectual property (Santoro & Gopalakrishnan, 2000; Perkmann et al., 2013). *Research Impact:* The quality and quantity of joint publications, citation metrics, and participation in high-impact conferences measure the academic influence of the UIC. These indicators highlight the scholarly contributions and academic value generated by the collaboration (Laursen et al., 2011; Siegel et al., 2003). *Economic Impact:* Metrics such as revenue from commercialization, the creation of startups, and broader economic contributions like job creation and regional growth assess the UIC's economic impact on both industry partners and the broader economy (Boardman & Ponomariov, 2009; Franco & Haase, 2015). *Capacity Building and Human Capital Development:* The number of students and researchers developing new skills and enhancing research capabilities are crucial metrics. The involvement of graduate students, particularly in PhD programs, indicates the collaboration's role in talent development and academic-industry synergies (Klofsten & Jones-Evans, 2000). *Partnership Sustainability:* The longevity and continuity of the partnership, the satisfaction levels of both partners and the potential for future collaborations are important indicators of a sustainable UIC. Long-term partnerships often lead to repeated collaborations, reflecting the enduring value of the UIC (Ankrah & AL-Tabbaa, 2015; Perkmann & Walsh, 2007).

This study aims to comprehensively evaluate UICs by utilizing these metrics, offering insights into their effectiveness in driving innovation, economic growth, and academic excellence.

## **3. Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Design**

A qualitative research design is adopted to explore factors influencing UIC success and develop context-specific performance metrics. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders—university administrators, industry representatives, and academic researchers—will provide in-depth insights into UICs' processes, challenges, and outcomes.

### **3.2 Participant Selection and Interview Process**

Purposive sampling will select 8 participants with significant UIC experience, including directors of collaboration offices, industry-engaged professors, and industry representatives. Semi-structured interviews, lasting 60-90 minutes, will explore participants' experiences, success factors, challenges, and the impact of UICs. Interviews will be recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed for accuracy.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis will identify and report patterns in the interview data. The process involves familiarization, open coding to identify concepts, axial coding to organize categories, and selective coding to refine critical themes. Triangulation will enhance the validity of findings by comparing interview data with existing literature and documentation.

### **3.4 Ethical Considerations**

Participants will receive informed consent forms outlining the study's purpose, process, and their rights. Consent will be obtained before interviews, and participants' identities will remain confidential, with data anonymized and securely stored. Participation is voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time.

## **4. Research Findings and Analysis**

### **4.1 UIC Models and Current Status in Taiwan**

#### ***The Trend of Multi-Technology Integration***

University-industry collaboration in Taiwan has recently evolved from traditional single-technology approaches to multi-technology integration, driven by industry demands for advanced technologies. Universities of science and technology and technical colleges have become central to these R&D partnerships due to their strong research capabilities and equipped laboratories. They offer advanced equipment and technical support, enabling interdisciplinary teams to address complex challenges.

This multi-technology model allows collaborations to adapt to market changes, enhancing technological capabilities and speeding up the transition of innovations to practical use. As noted, "Interdisciplinary cooperation is increasingly essential; a single technology cannot meet market needs alone" (D11:24). This approach strengthens industry ties and promotes the application and commercialization of new technologies.

#### ***Challenges and Shortcomings***

Despite the benefits of the multi-technology integration model, universities need help in these collaborations. One major issue is managing intellectual property rights (IPR) and patents. Universities often need more industry-specific knowledge and strategies for effective patent management, which can undermine the effectiveness of their collaborations. As one academic mentioned, "Companies have an edge in patent strategy, while universities need more strategic thinking" (C03:15). This gap affects universities' ability to secure benefits from technology transfer and patent commercialization.

Additionally, universities and companies may have conflicting goals and resource strategies. Companies typically focus on short-term economic gains and quick technology application, while universities prioritize long-term research and academic publications. These differing objectives can reduce collaboration efficiency and hinder project outcomes. Universities' rigid resource allocation further limits their ability to adapt to varying R&D needs, affecting the progress of joint projects.

### **4.2 Key Factors Influencing University-Industry R&D**

#### ***The Importance of Interdisciplinary Collaboration***

Interdisciplinary collaboration is crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of university-industry R&D partnerships. As technology evolves, single disciplines or technologies often need to improve addressing complex market demands. Therefore, universities view interdisciplinary collaboration as essential. Universities recognize that applying interdisciplinary knowledge improves R&D outcomes. This approach is evident in research teams and project design, where experts from various fields work together to tackle technological challenges. This model boosts R&D efficiency and fosters innovative results. One academic stated, "Interdisciplinary cooperation is increasingly necessary; experts from different fields must collaborate to solve complex problems" (A05:30).

Interdisciplinary collaboration also facilitates the cross-application of knowledge, leading to innovations and broader technology applications, thereby enhancing opportunities for university-industry partnerships.



### ***Market Orientation and Commercialization Potential***

In contrast to academia's focus on interdisciplinary collaboration, companies prioritize technologies' practicality and market orientation in university-industry partnerships. Companies expect university research to consider commercialization potential and market demand, aiming for technologies that can be applied directly in production rather than remaining theoretical.

As one industry representative noted, "We need technologies that can be quickly brought to market. If university research can't be commercialized, it's not valuable to us" (B02:42). This highlights companies' preference for projects with clear market potential and their emphasis on the speed of commercialization. Companies also value how quickly R&D outcomes can be transformed into marketable products. They expect universities to play a more active role in technology transfer and patent strategy to ensure rapid commercialization of research results.

### ***Resource Allocation and Flexibility Needs***

Resource allocation is a critical factor in R&D collaboration, with academic and industry perspectives showing similarities and differences. Academics stress the need for increased support from the government and universities, including funding, equipment, and specialized personnel, while reducing administrative burdens. One academic noted, "Resource allocation is often too rigid. We need more flexibility to meet different R&D needs" (E07:58).

Universities face constraints from government policies and internal management, making it hard to adapt quickly to market demands. Complicated processes for fund usage and equipment acquisition can delay R&D projects. On the other hand, companies advocate for more flexible resource allocation aligned with market needs to optimize the development and application of technologies.

Companies also suggest that universities consider industry needs more actively in resource allocation, as this impacts the speed and quality of technological development. They seek more flexible and open collaboration mechanisms with universities to enhance efficiency and accelerate the application of technologies.

## **4.3 Performance Indicators to Evaluate UIC R&D**

### ***The Core Importance of Innovation Outcomes and Research Impact***

The interview insights align with the performance indicator framework, emphasizing innovation outcomes and research impact as key indicators. Both academia and industry agree that the innovativeness and market impact of R&D results are central to evaluating collaboration success. As one industry representative noted, "We expect tangible innovation outcomes from university-industry collaborations that are directly marketable and economically beneficial" (F09:47). This shared view underscores the importance of technology innovativeness and applicability in assessing collaboration effectiveness.

However, focusing solely on these outcomes may only partially capture collaboration success. Interviews also revealed the importance of market transformation speed and patent strategies, which needed to be fully covered in the original framework. This highlights the need to revise and enhance the performance indicator framework to address practical challenges in university-industry collaborations better.

### ***The Importance of Market Transformation Speed and Patent Portfolio Strategies***

During the interviews, companies highlighted the importance of market transformation speed and patent portfolio strategies in evaluating R&D outcomes. How quickly technology can be commercialized is a crucial indicator of R&D effectiveness for companies. Technologies that cannot be rapidly brought to market lose their appeal. As one industry representative stated, "Market transformation speed is crucial for

us. If technology can't be quickly commercialized, we may opt for other projects with greater market potential" (H15:26). This underscores the importance of market orientation in university-industry collaborations.

Additionally, companies emphasized the need for effective patent portfolio strategies. Patents protect technological outcomes and enhance market value. Companies believe universities should play a more significant role in developing patent strategies to maximize the market benefits of their technologies. These insights suggest that market transformation speed and patent strategies should be integrated into performance evaluation criteria to assess collaboration effectiveness better.

### ***The Necessity of Differentiated Performance Indicators and Importance Ranking***

The interviews revealed the need for performance indicators that account for the diverse nature of universities and industry sectors. A one-size-fits-all approach may not effectively measure collaboration success. Academics suggest creating a more adaptable indicator system that reflects the unique features of various universities and industry needs, providing a more precise assessment of collaboration effectiveness. As one academic pointed out, "We need an indicator system that accommodates the diversity of universities and industries to make assessments more relevant" (B04:25). This emphasizes the necessity for evaluation systems to be flexible and responsive to different requirements.

Moreover, the ranking of performance indicators was updated based on interview feedback. The most critical indicators are innovation outcomes, market transformation capabilities, interdisciplinary collaboration, and resource management. These revisions address the real-world challenges both industries and academia face, offering valuable guidance for future research and policy-making.

## **5. Conclusion and Discussion**

This study aimed to construct practical performance indicators for UIC in R&D at Taiwan's science and technology universities. Through a comprehensive literature review and in-depth interviews, we identified key factors influencing UIC R&D performance and developed a corresponding set of indicators. This chapter presents the research summary, discusses the constructed indicators, and explores implications for policy and practice.

### **5.1 Research Summary and Presentation of the Indicator System**

The core achievement of this study is developing a performance indicator system that addresses the key factors identified through literature and interviews: innovation outcomes, market transformation speed, resource management, and intellectual property (IP) strategy. These indicators are crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of UIC in R&D.

Innovation outcomes are highly valued by academia and industry for academic contribution and their potential to drive economic and technological advancement. Market transformation speed, particularly emphasized by the sector, is critical for gaining a competitive edge and ensuring the commercial value of technologies. Effective resource management is also vital, as academia and industry require flexibility in resource allocation to meet varying project needs. Additionally, managing IP and strategic patenting is essential to prevent conflicts and ensure the efficient commercialization of research results.

### **5.2 Validation and Practical Application of the Indicator System**

The constructed indicators were validated through interviews, showing that innovation outcomes and market transformation speed are universally regarded as key to UIC's success. However, a single set of indicators may not fully capture the diversity of collaboration models across different industries and academic institutions. This suggests the need for a more flexible and adaptable system.

### 5.3 Implications for Policy and Practice

For policymakers, it is crucial to enhance support for UIC by providing adequate resources, simplifying administrative processes, reducing barriers, and promoting the effective commercialization of research. Universities should optimize internal management, particularly in resource allocation and IP strategy, to better align with industry needs and ensure smooth collaboration. Companies should actively engage in university research to guide projects towards practical, market-driven outcomes.

### 5.4 Research Challenges and Limitations

Balancing the differing priorities of academia and industry was a significant challenge, as academia often prioritizes long-term research while industry focuses on immediate market applications. This divergence made constructing a universally applicable indicator system difficult. Additionally, the study's limited sample size and regional focus may affect the generalizability of the findings, suggesting that future research should expand and diversify the study's scope.

### 5.5 Conclusion

This study provides a validated set of performance indicators for UIC R&D, offering valuable tools for evaluating collaboration effectiveness between Taiwan's universities and industries. Although there are limitations, the findings contribute significantly to UIC's theoretical understanding and practical advancement in R&D.

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# The Cooperation between Experiential Metaphors and Logical Metaphors in Creating Texts from Systemic Functional Linguistics

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors in text creation from the perspective of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). While extensive research has been conducted on grammatical metaphors, few studies have examined the interaction between these two types of metaphors, particularly in educational settings. This research adopts a quasi-experimental approach, involving 213 university students, to investigate how the integration of these metaphors can enhance learners' ability to analyze and produce complex texts. A mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection, was used to assess the effectiveness of different instructional methods. The results reveal that the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors significantly improves students' reading comprehension and writing skills, with nominalization playing a critical role in transforming congruent expressions into metaphorical ones. The findings suggest that teaching grammatical metaphors through interactive and discussion-based learning methods leads to better student engagement and performance compared to traditional lecture-based approaches. This study contributes to theoretical understanding of grammatical metaphors and offers practical recommendations for language educators, highlighting the importance of integrating these metaphors into curricula to enhance learners' linguistic proficiency.

**Keywords:** Systemic Functional Linguistics, Grammatical metaphor, Experiential metaphor, Logical metaphor, Nominalization

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background information

Grammatical metaphor (GM), a concept introduced by Halliday (1985), represents a significant development in modern linguistics, offering insights into how language operates beyond conventional, congruent expressions. GM is divided into two primary types: interpersonal metaphor and ideational metaphor, reflecting the interpersonal and experiential metafunctions, respectively. Martin (1992) later expanded this framework by introducing textual metaphor, completing the triad of alternative linguistic expressions linked to the three metafunctions of systemic functional linguistics: interpersonal meaning (interpersonal metaphor), experiential meaning (ideational metaphor), and textual meaning (textual metaphor). Among these, ideational metaphor has garnered particular attention due to its dual engagement with congruent and incongruent semantic expressions. It plays a pivotal role in the construal of human experience through the system of transitivity, while also encoding logical relationships such as time, cause, purpose, condition and others. For instance, the congruent expression "*She didn't come on time because the rain was very heavy*" demonstrates how human experiences—represented by the phenomenon of rain and the event of not arriving on time—are linked through logical relations in both semantics and lexicogrammar. This expression illustrates Halliday's concept of ideational meaning, which encompasses both experiential and logical meanings. However, as Halliday (2014) asserts, language is a resource of choice, offering alternative ways to express both internal and external realities. Depending on the context, multiple incongruent or metaphorical expressions can emerge from a single congruent one, such as "*The heavy rain caused her delay*" or "*Her delay was due to the heavy rain.*" These metaphorical expressions

highlight the cooperation between experiential metaphors and logical metaphors in realizing ideational meaning. While substantial research has explored the theoretical foundations of grammatical metaphor, particularly within scientific discourse, few studies have examined the interaction between experiential and logical metaphors in everyday text creation. Moreover, the pedagogical implications of teaching these metaphors to language learners remain largely underexplored. Understanding how experiential and logical metaphors cooperate in meaning-making is essential for language learners, as it enhances their ability to comprehend and produce complex varieties in expressions. Addressing this gap is crucial, as integrating grammatical metaphors into language curricula can significantly improve learners' analytical and practical language skills. This study seeks to investigate the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors in text creation, offering theoretical insights and practical applications for language teaching. By being fostered an understanding of grammatical metaphor, learners can develop the ability to interpret and express nuanced ideas, ultimately leading to improved reading comprehension, writing and other skills including analyzing and creating texts. Furthermore, this research provides educators with practical strategies for incorporating grammatical metaphor instruction into their classrooms, contributing to more effective language learning outcomes.

### ***1.2. Aims and significance of the study***

This study aims to address the gaps in studying and teaching grammatical metaphor by focusing on the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors in general text creation, rather than limiting the investigation to specific discourse types like scientific texts. It explores how these two types of metaphor interact to enhance the coherence and complexity of language, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of ideational GM. By doing so, the research offers new insights into the transformational processes that occur when language moves from congruent to metaphorical forms, highlighting the role of nominalization as a key mechanism in this transformation. Moreover, this study contributes to filling the gap in pedagogical applications by exploring how the cooperation between these metaphors can be taught and applied in language learning contexts. This research provides practical strategies for integrating grammatical metaphors into more general English language teaching, particularly to improve learners' reading comprehension, writing and other language skills. By examining how learners can be taught to recognize and use both experiential and logical metaphors, the study offers new methods for enhancing their ability to create and interpret complex texts.

### ***1.3. Research questions***

*Research question 1: What is the cooperation between experiential metaphors and logical metaphors in texts?*

*Research question 2: How are the procedures of learning and teaching experiential metaphors and logical metaphors carried out for English students at a university?*

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

To increase English students' potentials of using English better, teaching them and helping them recognize and then apply the cooperation between logical GM and experiential GM in ideational GM needs quasi-experiential methods and other methods as we have done with 213 students across different classes:

**Table 1:** Number of students' Functional Grammar classes

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Number of students</b>
An introduction to Functional Grammar ( including grammatical metaphor)	Functional Grammar 1	51
	Functional Grammar 2	71
	Functional Grammar 3	52
	Functional Grammar 4	19
	Functional Grammar 5	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>213</b>

**(1) Qualitative method** is used to gain in-depth insights into student experiences and challenges through interviews, observations, and reflections. The study uses this information to adjust teaching strategies and improve student engagement.

#### *Interviews and focus groups*

- Conduct interviews or focus groups with students from each class.
- Ask questions about their understanding of ideational grammatical metaphor, how they apply it in practice, and their experiences with different teaching methods.
- Analyze the responses to identify common challenges and areas of confusion; this can inform adjustments to teaching methods and materials to better address students' needs.

#### *Classroom observations*

- Observe classes while they are learning ideational grammatical metaphor.
- Note how students interact with the materials, the types of question they ask, and how they use the metaphor in discussions and assignments.
- Use observational data to gauge the effectiveness of different teaching approaches and to see which strategies resonate most with students.

#### *Student reflections*

- Have students write reflective journals or essays on their learning experiences with interpersonal grammatical metaphor.
- Review these reflections to understand students' self-reported progress, difficulties, and insights; this feedback can guide modifications in teaching practices.

**(2) Quantitative method** is used to measure and analyze the effectiveness of teaching methods using pre- and post-tests, surveys, and performance metrics. This approach helps in understanding how well students are grasping ideational grammatical metaphor.

#### *Pre- and post-tests*

- Administer tests on ideational grammatical metaphor before and after instruction.
- Compare scores to assess how much students have learned.
- Use statistical techniques to analyze changes in test scores. For example, calculate mean score improvements and perform paired tests to determine if the changes are statistically significant.

#### *Surveys and questionnaires*

- Create surveys to collect data on students' confidence and perceived competence with interpersonal grammatical metaphor.
- Analyze survey responses to identify trends and correlations. For example, you might find that students in smaller classes report higher confidence, which could suggest that class size affects learning outcomes.

#### *Performance metrics*

- Track students' performance on assignments and projects related to ideational grammatical metaphor. Measure aspects such as accuracy, creativity, and application of the metaphor in various contexts.
- Use statistical analysis to compare performance across different classes or teaching methods. This could involve calculating averages, standard deviations, and performing ANOVA to assess differences between groups.

**(3) Quasi-experimental method** is used to evaluate the impact of different teaching methods on student outcomes through non-equivalent groups design, case studies, and longitudinal studies. This helps in determining the effectiveness of different instructional approaches.

#### *Non-equivalent groups design*

- Implement different teaching methods in different classes and compare their effectiveness. For example, one class might use interactive activities and discussions, while another uses lectures and readings.
- Compare outcomes such as test scores, assignment grades, and student feedback across classes.
- Use statistical methods like regression analysis to determine if the differences in teaching methods lead to significant variations in student performance.

### **Case study analysis**

- Select a few classes as case studies and analyze the impact of different instructional approaches on students' understanding of ideational grammatical metaphor.
- Conduct a detailed examination of teaching methods, student engagement, and learning outcomes in these case studies.
- Identify best practices and areas for improvement based on qualitative and quantitative data from these cases.

### **Longitudinal study**

- Track students' progress over time to assess the long-term impact of teaching methods on their understanding and use of ideational grammatical metaphor.
- Collect data at multiple points throughout the course or over several courses.
- Analyze changes in students' performance and understanding to evaluate the sustained effectiveness of different teaching methods.

The primary reason for selecting a quasi-experimental design is its alignment with the study's goal of investigating the practical effects of teaching grammatical metaphors in a real-world educational context. In the study, the research aimed to evaluate how the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors could be taught to improve students' reading and writing skills. Given that fully randomizing student groups or completely controlling classroom environments was not practical, the quasi-experimental design provided a structured yet flexible framework. This allowed the research to compare outcomes from different instructional strategies while preserving the classroom's natural learning environment. Furthermore, quasi-experiments are particularly well-suited for educational interventions where the random assignment of students to different teaching methods may be impractical due to ethical or logistical constraints. This study, involving 213 students across different classes, leveraged this design to explore the effects of teaching methods on students' ability to understand and apply grammatical metaphors in text creation. The quasi-experimental approach enabled a meaningful comparison of instructional outcomes while respecting the educational setting's inherent limitations.

## **3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL ISSUES**

### **3.1. Literature review**

Halliday in *"An Introduction to Functional Grammar"* (1985, 1994, 2004) first introduced the concept of GM in this foundational book. The 1994 and 2004 editions, co-authored with Matthiessen, further elaborated on this concept, especially in the context of systemic functional grammar. In *"Construing Experience Through Meaning: A Language-Based Approach to Cognition"* (1999), Halliday and Matthiessen explore how language constructs experience, discussing the role of GM in expressing meaning. *"Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar"* (2014) provides a general picture of grammatical metaphor, ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions in language. *"Systemic Functional Grammar: A First Step into the Theory"* by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) - A detailed exploration of the theory, analyzes GMs in English and shows their impact on meaning-making processes. Martin in *"English Text: System and Structure"* (1992) introduces the concept of textual metaphor as a third type of GM, building on Halliday's original framework. This book examines how different metafunctions (interpersonal, ideational, and textual) are realized in English texts. In *"Working with Functional Grammar"* (2000), Martin, Matthiessen and Painter provide practical applications of systemic functional grammar, including the use of GM in various contexts. Thompson, in *"Introducing Functional Grammar"* (1996, 2004, 2013), provides an accessible introduction to Halliday's systemic functional grammar, with detailed explanations of GMs, particularly in the context of modality and register. In *"Using Functional Grammar: An Explorer's Guide"* (2000) – Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, and Yallop discuss various the role of GM in understanding complex texts. *"The Language of Science"* (2004) – Butt et al. discuss how GM functions in scientific discourse to construct complex meanings. Zhang in *"Grammatical Metaphor in Chinese EFL Learners' Writing"* (2009)- investigates how Chinese learners of English as a foreign language use grammatical metaphors in their writing, focusing on the educational implications. *"Metaphor and Second Language Learning"* (2015)- Examines the role of metaphor, including GM, in second language acquisition and its teaching implications. Martin and White with *"The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English"* (2005) focus on appraisal theory within SFL and discuss how interpersonal meanings, including metaphorical expressions, are used in evaluative language. *"Grammatical Metaphor: What Do We Know?"* (1998), a



chapter in the book *“Language and Education: Learning and Teaching in Society”* by Martin, White and Wodak, provides a detailed discussion of the development and application of GM. Despite the rich body of literature on GM, there remains a significant gap in research regarding the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors. While previous studies have provided valuable insights into how individual types of GMs function within specific genres, they have not adequately addressed how these metaphors work together to construct meaning in more general text creation. This shows an important gap, as understanding this interaction is crucial for comprehending how language is used to create more abstract, layered meanings. Additionally, while the educational implications of GM have been explored in some studies, such as Devrim (2015) who designed pedagogical interventions to teach GM, there has been little focus on practical classroom applications that integrate both experiential and logical metaphors. Most research has been either theoretical or limited to specific learner populations, such as advanced EFL students in academic writing contexts. The need for practical approaches that help language learners understand and apply these concepts in broader language skills development, particularly in reading and writing, remains largely unexplored.

### ***3.2. Theoretical issues as key parts of teaching experiential and logical metaphors***

This section of the study is presented as a double function; it functions as basic theoretical issues and it also functions as key parts of teaching experiential and logical metaphors.

#### ***- Construing experience through meaning***

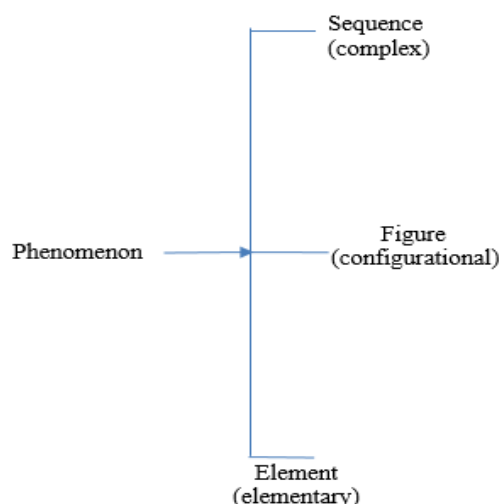
Halliday’s work on SFL emphasizes the integral role of grammar in representing human experience through language. According to Halliday (1992), the grammar is a theory of human experience and the grammar construes this kind of change in human experiences in the form of a process configuration. This underscores how grammar, particularly through experiential metaphors, encapsulates changes in human experience by configuring them as processes within the clause structure. Halliday (1985) shows that ideational grammatical metaphor broadly covers both experiential and logical metaphors. Experiential metaphors transform actions and experiences into abstract or nominal forms, while logical metaphors restructure how logical relationships are presented. Both types contribute to conveying complex and nuanced meanings by moving beyond direct, congruent expressions, thus enriching the text’s ability to reflect and construct conceptual realities. Experiential grammatical Metaphor involves representing processes, actions, or experiences in a way that shifts their grammatical representation. For example, a process (verb) might be transformed into a participant (noun), or a dynamic action might be expressed as a static thing. This metaphor allows for the expression of abstract experiences and complex processes in a more condensed or conceptual form. An example would be changing the verb *“to understand”* into the noun *“understanding”*. “Logical grammatical metaphor focuses on how logical relationships between elements within a text are represented metaphorically. It involves shifting the grammatical representation of relationships such as cause-effect, temporal sequences, and conditions. For instance, a causal relationship that is typically expressed with a conjunction (e.g., *“because”*) might be represented through nominalization or other structural changes. An example is turning the conjunction *“because”* into a nominalized form like *“the reason for”* which abstractly represents the logical connection. The description and analysis of some typical data shows Halliday’s ideology (2014: 792) that nominalizing is the single most powerful resource for creating grammatical metaphor. The process of transforming shows by nominalization, the processes congruently worded as verbs and properties congruently worded as adjectives are reworded metaphorically as nouns as Halliday emphasizes: “Instead of functioning in the clause, as Process or Attribute, they function as Thing in the nominal group.”

Before delving into the concept of types of phenomenon and construing experience through meaning, it is essential to recognize Halliday’s foundational contributions to understanding how language reflects and structures human experience. One of his key theoretical constructs is the system of phenomena, which serves as a framework for analyzing how different layers of experience are encoded in language. Halliday identifies three distinct levels of complexity within this system: element, figure, and sequence, which together offer a comprehensive way to represent the world through meaning.

Halliday (1999) describes a “figure” as “a representation of experience in the form of a configuration of elements- processes, participants, and circumstances”. This highlights the role of experiential metaphors in transforming processes and actions into abstract representations of reality. In a similar vein, Halliday (2014) stresses that “nominalizing is the single most powerful resource for creating grammatical metaphor,”

pointing to nominalization as a key mechanism that converts processes (verbs) into entities (nouns), thereby facilitating more complex and abstract expressions in both experiential and logical domains. Finally, Halliday and Matthiessen (1999) assert that “the ideational function consists of both the experiential and logical components, together constructing a representation of the world through language.” This reinforces the idea that the experiential and logical components of metaphor are inseparably linked, jointly forming the ideational function that allows language to represent and structure human experience comprehensively.

One of Halliday’s important ideas involved in construing experience through meaning is the system of phenomena. He says that a phenomenon is the most general experiential category. To him, the phenomena of experience are of three orders of complexity: element, figure and sequence as the plate below shows:

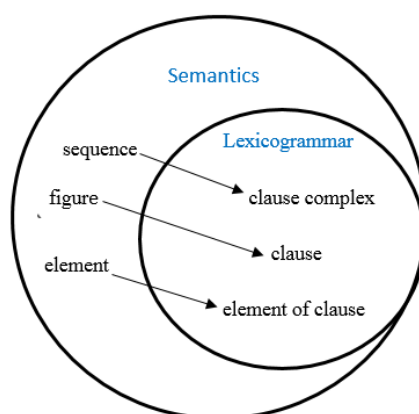


**Figure 1:** Types of phenomenon (Halliday, 1999: 49)

Elements are processes, participants and circumstances which fill the roles in a figure. For example:

(1) *One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.* (King, 1963)

In (1), there are three types of elements: *circumstances* ( One hundred years later, on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity), *participant* (the Negro) and *process* (lives); these elements work together to form a figure. So, “a *figure* is a representation of experience in the form of a configuration” (Halliday& Mathiessen,1999). A sequence is the highest level in the system of phenomena and it consists of at least two figures and so it forms some logical relations between these figures. The following figure shows us the system of semantic units and the system of lexicogrammar units. In the semantics aspect, there are three units from the highest to the lowest as sequence, figure and element. In the lexicogrammar aspect, there are three respective units: clause complex, clause and element of clause.



**Figure 2:** Typical realization of sequences, figures and elements (Halliday, 1999:55)

Halliday (1992: 511) says: “*The grammar is a theory of human experience*”. It is the main reason why, in the system of meanings, experiential meaning is considered as one of the three key metafunctions, beside interpersonal and textual ones. He also explains that the basic component of all experience is change; it means that when something changes from one state to another, it projects itself on to our consciousness. The six types of process in the system of transitivity are persuasive evidences for the linguistic foundations of a clause because, according systemic functional linguistics, the grammar construes this kind of change in human experiences in the form of a process configuration. In this sense, a clause is a fundamental element of lexicogrammar, consisting of a process as a central part and other elements like participants and circumstances. For example:

(2) *Halliday completed ‘Halliday’s An Introduction to Functional Grammar’ in 2014.*

In (2), the clause has a process “*completed*”, two participants “*Halliday*” and “*Halliday’s An Introduction to Functional Grammar*” and a circumstance “*in 2014*”. The construal of experience in this case is the representation of the process “*completed*” with participants and a circumstance and this is referred as the experiential.

Experiential metaphors involve rewording processes and participants into more abstract, nominalized forms, transforming actions and qualities into nouns. This allows for a more compact, dense expression of meaning; turning “*She explained the situation*” (congruent expression) into “*Her explanation of the situation...*” (metaphorical expression) is an example for the case. Logical metaphors deal with how relationships such as cause-effect, temporal, and condition are restructured into more implicit and abstract forms. Instead of explicitly stating logical relations like “*because*,” the meaning can be compacted through nominalization or other grammatical shifts. For example, “*because*” becomes “*due to*” or “*the reason for*” or “*because of*.” When these two metaphors work together, they enable the construction of complex and abstract texts by not only transforming actions into things but also by linking these things with abstract logical relations. In SFL, the combination of experiential and logical metaphors leads to the creation of ideational meaning. Ideational meaning refers to how language represents real-world phenomena, events, and relations. Experiential metaphors handle how events (processes) are represented, while logical metaphors manage how those events are connected or related logically. For example: Experiential metaphors “*The failure of the negotiation*” is a reconstruction from “*The negotiation failed*” and “*miscommunication*” from “*people communicated wrongly*”; logical metaphors: “*because*” becomes “*due to*,” or “*because of*” as in “*The failure of the negotiation was due to miscommunication.*” In this case, the experiential metaphor nominalizes the process (“*fail*” → “*failure*”), and the logical metaphor transforms the conjunction “*because*” into a more formal, abstract relation like “*due to*.” Both transformations make the sentence more abstract and conceptually dense, characteristic of formal and academic texts.

It is important to understand that the construal of experience in language does not occur in isolation. Instead, experiences are often represented through interconnected structures, where figures combine to form more complex meanings. These combinations give rise to various relationships between clauses, allowing language to express not only individual experiences but also the logical connections between them in logical-semantic relation and syntactic relation as the following:

### **- Logico-semantic relations and syntactic relations**

In reality, “*experience*” is not only construed in separation but also construed in a structure combined with figures and this creates different relations between the clauses. For example: in clause (2) above, there is another clause combined in (3):

(3) *Halliday completed Halliday’s An Introduction to Functional Grammar in 2014 and then this great book has been popularized in many parts of the world.*

Clearly, these two clauses reflect the relations of expansion by the conjunction “*and*” also time by adverbial “*then*”. The relation like this is referred to “*logical*”. As we see, example (2) reflects experiential meaning and example (3) reflects both experiential meaning and logical meaning; both of them constitute ideational meaning- one of the three lines of meaning in Halliday’s theory.

From the aspect of semantics, meanings are expressed in terms of lexicogrammar by wording. In this process, when realizing the complicated phenomena by wording, the logico-semantic relations can appear in one of the two kinds: expansion or projection. For example, in the process of wording, meanings are realized in the clause complex with the relations as the following:

### Expansion

(4) [a] *We can never be satisfied* [b] *as long as the Negro is the victim of unspeakable horrors of police brutality.* (King, 1963)

The above clause complex is of two clauses: The first one [a] “*We can never be satisfied*” is called the primary clause; the next one [b] “*as long as the Negro is the victim of unspeakable horrors of police brutality*” is called the secondary clause. In this logico-semantic structure, the primary clause is expanded by the second one.

### Projection

(5) [a] *We refuse to believe* [b] *that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity in this Nation.* (King, 1963)

The clause complex above shows that the secondary clause [b]) is projected by the primary clause [a], which instates it as an idea from the phenomenon.

### Expansion and projection

In fact, we can see some logico-semantic relations more complicated which are of both expansion and projection like this example:

||| *And then we knew* || *we were going up to Cairns at Christmas* || *and we'd be away,* || *so we, we deadlocked everything* || *and we told people* || *we were going away;* || *we told the neighbours,* || *we got mum to go and check the place* || *while we were away* || *and on Christmas night they came back* || *and they took all our music equipment ...* |||(adapted from Halliday, 2014).

Another example:

(6), *We cannot be satisfied* [a] *as long as the Negro in Mississippi cannot vote* [b] and *the Negro in New York believes* [c] *he has nothing for which to vote*[d]. (King, 1963)

(6) is an example of a clause complex with 4 clauses and between these clauses are different relations: The clause [a] “*We cannot be satisfied*” is an initial clause and the next ones are supplementary ones in semantics. We can analyze this sequence into the following figures:

[a] *We cannot be satisfied* [b] *as long as the Negro in Mississippi cannot vote* [c] *and the Negro in New York believes* [d] *he has nothing for which to vote.*

The logico-semantic relation between [a] “*We ...*” and [b] “*as long as ...*” is the one of expansion; the logico-semantic relation between [[b]] “*as long as ...*and [[ c]] “*the Negro in New York believes* [[[d]]] *he has nothing for which to vote*” is also the one of expansion; the logico- semantic relation between [[[c]]] “*the Negro in New York believes* [[[d]]] *he has nothing for which to vote*” is the one of projection. Depending the contexts, all of these congruent expressions can be reworded or reconstructed into metaphorical expressions in which the cooperation between experiential metaphors and logical ones is carried out.

### - The degree of interdependency of the clauses in a clause complex

The degree of interdependency between clauses in a clause complex, known as taxis, is a crucial aspect in systemic functional linguistics for understanding how clauses relate to each other. Taxis distinguishes between two types of clause relationships: parataxis and hypotaxis. In parataxis, clauses are of equal status, meaning they are structurally independent of each other, while in hypotaxis, clauses are of unequal status, with one clause being dominant and the other dependent.

#### Parataxis: Equal Status

In paratactic relations, two or more clauses are linked as equal components in a clause complex, with none being dependent on the other. This creates a coordination between the clauses, where both can stand independently. For example:

(6) *One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corner of American society* and *(he) finds himself an exile in his own land.* (King, 1963)

In this example, the two underlined clauses are linked by the conjunction “and,” but they retain equal grammatical status, each contributing independently to the meaning. This type of relationship is denoted as “1” (initiating clause) and “2” (continuing clause) according to Halliday's system of taxis.

*Hypotaxis: Unequal Status*

In contrast, hypotaxis represents a relationship of subordination, where one clause (the dominant clause) is grammatically independent, while the other clause (the dependent clause) relies on the dominant one for its meaning. For example:

(7) *This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. (King, 1963)*

In this clause complex, the clause “until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality” is dependent of the first one; it functions as a part of time suppletion for the first clause.

Here, the clause “until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality” is a dependent clause that functions as a time adjunct to the main clause, illustrating a temporal relationship. This unequal relationship is marked as “ $\alpha$ ” (dominant clause) and “ $\beta$ ” (dependent clause) in Halliday's notation of hypotaxis. Halliday (2014) called these types of relation hypotaxis/parataxis and they can be explained by the table below:

**Table 2:** Primary and secondary clauses in a clause nexus (Halliday, 2014:442)

Clause nexus	Primary	Secondary
parataxis	1 (initiating)	2 (continuing)
hypotaxis	$\alpha$ (dominant)	$\beta$ (dependent)

In the paratactic relation, the primary is the initiating clause and the secondary is the continuing one a clause complex; in the hypotactic relation, one clause is the dominant clause functioning as a syntactic foundation and one clause is the dependent one. Example in paratactic relation:

(8) *The loss of species is happening at an unprecedented rate, and it is happening in real time. (Kimmerer, 2013)*

Example in hypotactic relation:

(9) *When we practice gratitude we are acting as stewards of the earth, honoring the gifts we receive and acknowledging the relationships that sustain us. (Kimmerer, 2013)*

Some terms should be systematically explained:

- Ideational meaning: This type of meaning consists of the experiential meanings in the logico semantic relations (usually by relators) in the clause complex.
- Congruent expression: Processes as Clauses: The original text identifies processes as actions performed by participants (with circumstances)
- Incongruent expression: Nominalization: The processes are nominalized and in many case this procedure leads to change the categories of lexical words or even functional words as relators.
- Ideational grammatical metaphor: When ideational meaning is expressed incongruently it becomes ideational grammatical metaphor.
- Logical meaning: This type of meaning shows the logical relation between a clause complex, usually with relators.
- Logical grammatical metaphor: Once there is a change of the categories of relator for reducing the clauses in a clause complex by nominalization, logical happens.

Clause nexus	Primary	Secondary
parataxis	(no)	(no)
hypotaxis	<i>we are acting as stewards of the earth, honoring the gifts we receive and acknowledging the relationships that sustain us.</i>	<i>When we practice gratitude</i>

The degree of interdependency, whether equal (parataxis) or unequal (hypotaxis), shapes the structure and meaning of a clause complex. Parataxis reflects coordination between clauses of equal rank, while hypotaxis shows subordination between clauses of unequal status, both of which are crucial for construing ideational and logical meanings in a text.

The clause relationships are integral to expressing ideational meaning, which consists of the experiential and logical components of language. Paratactic and hypotactic relations contribute to both congruent expressions (where processes are represented directly as clauses) and incongruent expressions (where processes are nominalized, creating ideational grammatical metaphors). For instance, nominalizing processes can transform a dynamic action into a static concept, enhancing the text's abstraction and complexity. When clauses in a complex are reduced or nominalized, logical grammatical metaphors emerge. These metaphors restructure the logical relations between clauses, transforming what would be a clause relationship into a noun phrase or other nominal forms. This kind of transformation allows for more compact expression of ideas and contributes to the richness of the text by reducing clause dependency while maintaining semantic relationships.

### **- The cooperation between experiential metaphors and logical metaphors**

The logico-semantic relation and the syntactic relation. In both types of relation, the experiential meaning is reflected in each clause and logical meaning is reflected in a sequence (a clause complex) in terms of clause combination by relators to expansion and by that (explicit or implicit) to projection. The types of expression for the experiential meaning in a clause and for logical meaning in a sequence are called congruent expressions. However, systemic functional linguistics shows: “A language is a resource for making meaning, and meaning resides in systemic patterns of choice” (Halliday, 2024: 22). In other words, besides congruent expressions of meaning there are metaphorical expressions for both experiential meaning and logical meaning. This type of expression needs a cooperation between experiential metaphors and logical metaphors. For example:

(10) *Because human activities have significantly altered natural habitats, many species are struggling to adapt to these changes.* (Kimmerer, 2013)

(10) is a mode of congruent expression for the experiential meanings in two clauses and for the logical meaning in a combination of the two clauses in a clause complex. In semantics, the experiential meaning and the logical meaning create the whole meaning of the clause complex and it is called ideational meaning. The metaphorical mode of this clause complex can open many potential choices for expressing the experiential meanings and logical meanings in the clause complex. This is clarified by the following examples:

(10.1) *Because of the significant alteration by human activities for natural habits, many species are struggling to adapt to these changes.*

(10.2) *Due to the significant alteration by human activities for natural habitats, many species are struggling to adapt to the changes.*

(10.3) *The cause of the struggle of many species to adapt to the change is the significant alteration by human activities for natural habitats.*

(10.4) *The significant alteration by human activities for natural habitats causes the struggle of many species to adapt to the change*

(10.5) *The significant alteration by human activities for natural habitats leads to the struggle of many species to adapt to the change*

(10.6) *The struggle of many species to adapt the change because of the significant alteration by human activities for natural habitats*

The comparison, between (10) and from (10.1) to (10.6) for the expressions of expansion shows that there are remarkable changes in the lexicogrammar reorganization of expressing the ideational meaning which composes of logical and experiential ones:

A clause complex is reorganized into a clause simplex from (10.1) to (10.4), and even into only a noun complex (10.6). Relator “because” in (10) as a conjunction is changed into a preposition phrase (because of) in (10.1), an adjective phrase (due to) in (10.2), a noun phrase (the cause) in (10.3), a verb (causes) in (10.4) and a preposition phrase (because of) as a part of the whole noun complex in (10.6). In the process of reorganizing a clause complex into a clause simplex and a noun complex, the change of lexical categories takes an important role including nominalization (Because of => the cause, alter => alteration, struggling => struggle, ...). One point that should be recognized in (10.5) is that the agnate items of the relator of ‘cause- effect’ relation can be replaced by a lexical item like ‘leads’ and some more items out of agnation like ‘make’, ‘form’, ‘create’...

Some examples for the case of projection:

(11) *We know through painful experience that freedom is never given by the oppressor.* (King, 1963)

This clause complex of projection can be reworded in the metaphorical mode as follows:

(11.1) *Through painful experience we know the fact of never- given freedom by the oppressor.*

(12) *I think I should indicate why I am here in Birmingham (King, 1963)*

(12.1) *I think of the obligation of indicating the reason for my presence in Birmingham.*

The comparison between (11) and (11.1) and between (12) and (12.1) for the expressions of projection shows that in the clause complexes the projecting clauses in which the experiential meanings reside are not changed except for the addition of preposition ‘of’ in form but the projected clauses are changed into noun phrases.

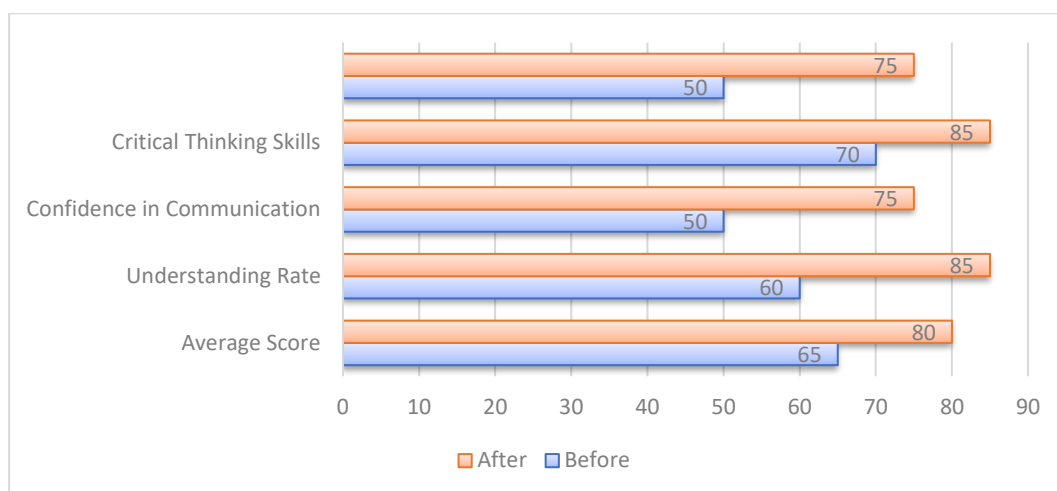
The general trend of these changes is downgrading, namely from clause complex to clause simplex and even to noun complex. For expansion, the expression belongs to congruent mode but the expressions in downgrading belong to metaphorical mode. For projection, as Halliday (2014) announces that the mental clauses (I/We think/believe...) are themselves metaphorical expressions of modality. Through the description and the analysis of the above transformation, we explore that the cooperation between the experiential metaphors and logical metaphors happen in the following conditions: For expansion, nominalization is the primary condition; depending the context, nominalization can happen in one clause or in both clauses in the clause complex. The role of ‘relator’ is very important to show the types of relation. But all the transformation from congruent expressions to metaphorical ones always depend on the context.

The third section above is also the key content of theoretical issues for teaching experiential and logical metaphors for English students. In the process of presenting the section shows that beside the theoretical contents, the ways of transforming from congruent expressions to metaphorical ones and versus are explained. It is considerable that the theoretical and practical contents related to the cooperation between the two metaphors in ideational metaphor are guided in detail. Furthermore, 100 selected samples consisting of congruent and incongruent expressions are used as the system of exercises in teaching. In addition, some paragraphs from newspapers and other types of text, especially scientific texts, literature and political speeches are introduced to students. The requirements of each exercise are identifying congruent expressions, incongruent expressions, understanding types of relation between clauses, transforming congruent expressions into metaphorical ones and otherwise, and finally analyzing and creating texts relating to grammatical metaphors including logical and experiential ones. All of the process of teaching theory and applying the theory to practice follows the methods and techniques as mentioned in section 2.

#### 4. THE RESULTS OF APPLYING DIFFERENT METHODS TO TEACH FOR STUDENTS ABOUT THE COOPERATION BETWEEN EXPERIENTIAL METAPHORS AND LOGICAL METAPHORS

In a recent study involving 213 students across five classes, the impact of teaching the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors was significant. Before the instruction, the average score on a pre-test was 65%, which rose to 80% after the lessons, marking an impressive improvement of 15 percentage points. Additionally, only 60% of students reported a strong understanding of metaphors prior to the course, but this figure climbed to 85% afterward, highlighting a 25-point increase in comprehension. Confidence in using metaphors also saw a notable boost; 50% of students felt assured in their skills before the instruction, while this rose to 75% afterward. Critical thinking abilities, measured through assessments, improved from an average score of 70% to 85%, again reflecting a 15-point enhancement. Lastly, class participation surged from 50% to 75%, demonstrating increased engagement and enthusiasm among students. These results illustrate the powerful role that metaphor instruction can play in enhancing understanding, confidence, and overall academic performance.

Metric	Before	After
Average Score	65%	80%
Understanding Rate	60%	85%
Confidence in Communication	50%	75%
Critical Thinking Skills	70%	85%
Class Participation	50%	75%



**Figure 3:** The effectiveness of teaching GM for students

Students from different classes expressed varying levels of understanding of ideational GM. Common challenges included difficulty in distinguishing between logical and experiential GMs and applying them in practical contexts. Many students found interactive and group-based learning activities more helpful than traditional lectures. Classes that incorporated interactive activities and discussions demonstrated higher student engagement. Students in these classes were more active in asking questions and applying ideational GM in discussions and assignments. Many students initially struggled with the concept of ideational GM but gradually gained confidence through repeated practice and group discussions. However, some students reported difficulties with self-reflection and though recognized their progress. The study provides clearer guidelines on how to reflect effectively and consider incorporating structured reflection prompts to guide students' self-assessment. A significant improvement in test scores was observed across all classes after the instruction period. On average, students' scores increased by 15% from pre- to post-tests, indicating a substantial understanding gained. Statistical analysis, such as paired t-tests, confirmed that the improvement in students' grasp of ideational GM. Students in smaller classes reported higher levels of confidence and perceived competence with ideational GM compared to those in larger classes. There was a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.45$ ) between class size and self-reported competence. Consider reducing class sizes or breaking larger classes into smaller groups for activities that focus on complex grammatical concepts to enhance learning outcomes. Analysis of assignments and projects showed varying performance levels across different teaching methods. Students in classes using interactive methods scored higher in terms of creativity and application of ideational GM in various contexts. Prioritize interactive teaching strategies, such as group discussions, peer reviews, and collaborative projects, to improve the application and understanding of ideational GM.

#### + Non-equivalent groups design

Different teaching methods yielded different outcomes. Classes utilizing interactive activities demonstrated better performance in tests and assignments compared to those relying on lectures and readings. Regression analysis suggested that interactive methods accounted for a 20% variation in test scores ( $\beta = 0.20$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). These implications focus on expanding the use of interactive activities to optimize learning outcomes.

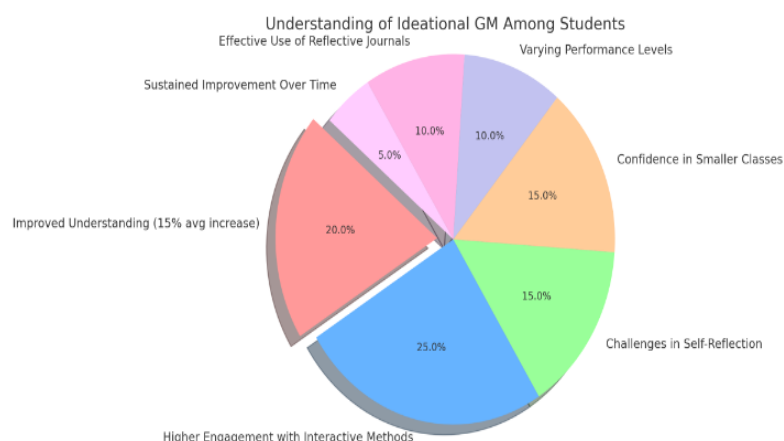
#### + Case study analysis

Case studies revealed that students in classes with varied instructional approaches (combination of lectures, interactive activities, and practical applications) performed better overall in understanding and applying ideational GM. The study combines diverse instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles and improve overall student engagement.

#### + Longitudinal study

Data collected over multiple points showed a sustained improvement in students' understanding and use of ideational GM. The study continued use of interactive and reflective teaching methods demonstrated long-term effectiveness. We maintain a diverse range of instructional methods over time to reinforce learning and ensure sustained progress.





**Figure 4:** The effectiveness of different methods

## 5. CONCLUSION

In general, the paper has answered the two research questions. This study has made significant contributions to both the theoretical understanding of grammatical metaphor and its practical application in language teaching. By examining the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors in text creation, this research has addressed an important gap in the existing literature. While previous studies have often focused on these metaphors in isolation, this study has demonstrated that their interaction plays a crucial role in creating cohesive and complex linguistic structures. The findings highlight how nominalization, a key process in both types of metaphors, facilitates the transformation of congruent expressions into metaphorical ones, thereby enhancing the depth and abstraction of meaning within texts.

### - Theoretical contributions:

One of the primary theoretical contributions of this study is its clarification of how experiential and logical metaphors work together to create ideational meaning. The research demonstrates that grammatical metaphors should not be viewed as isolated phenomena but rather as interdependent processes that enrich text structure and meaning. The ability to transform processes (verbs) into participants (nouns) and to restructure logical relationships (such as cause and effect) through nominalization significantly enhances the expressiveness of language. This interplay between experiential and logical metaphors allows for more compact and abstract forms of meaning, which are essential in both academic and everyday language use. Moreover, the study's findings emphasize the importance of recognizing grammatical metaphor as a key tool for developing more advanced linguistic proficiency. By shifting from congruent expressions to metaphorical forms, speakers and writers can convey more nuanced, sophisticated meanings. This shift is especially important for language learners as they move from basic communicative competence to higher-level discourse, such as academic writing or professional communication.

### - Practical implications for language teaching

The study's results have important implications for language education, particularly in improving learners' reading comprehension and writing skills. Based on the findings, several specific recommendations for language teaching can be made:

- (1) Integrating grammatical metaphors into the curriculum: Language educators should incorporate the teaching of both experiential and logical metaphors into their curricula, particularly for intermediate and advanced learners. By doing so, teachers can help students develop the ability to analyze and produce more complex texts. Introducing students to the concept of nominalization and its role in transforming processes into abstract entities can greatly improve their ability to engage with sophisticated linguistic structures.
- (2) Emphasizing the cooperation between metaphors: Educators should focus on teaching the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors as part of ideational meaning-making. For instance, when analyzing texts, teachers can highlight how these metaphors interact to create abstract concepts and logical relationships, thus encouraging students to think critically about how meaning is constructed. Activities that require students to transform congruent expressions into metaphorical forms will help reinforce these concepts.

(3) Applying metaphorical understanding to text production: Teachers can guide students in applying their understanding of grammatical metaphors to their own writing. By encouraging students to move beyond basic sentence structures and experiment with nominalization and abstract expression, educators can help them develop more sophisticated writing styles. This approach is especially valuable in academic writing, where the ability to use metaphorical expressions is crucial for conveying complex arguments and ideas.

(4) Adapting Teaching Methods Based on Class Size: As the study suggests, smaller class sizes or breaking large classes into smaller groups can significantly improve students' engagement with grammatical metaphors. Educators should consider implementing small-group discussions and activities where students can receive more personalized feedback and actively participate in learning. This approach is especially important when teaching advanced grammatical concepts that require deeper cognitive processing.

#### *Future research directions*

While this study has provided valuable insights into the cooperation between experiential and logical metaphors, there are still areas that require further exploration. Future research could focus on longitudinal studies that track the long-term retention and application of grammatical metaphors in various language contexts. Additionally, more controlled studies that isolate variables such as class size, prior knowledge, and teacher effectiveness could provide even clearer insights into the optimal conditions for teaching grammatical metaphors.

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# Fidelity in Diversity: The impact of Trust, Integrity and Diversity on Inclusion in Malaysian Open and Distance Learning

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of trust, integrity and diversity on inclusivity in the context of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Malaysia. Considering the concept of "fidelity in diversity", it seeks to understand how these factors contribute to fostering an inclusive environment for diverse ODL student groups. Data was collected from 861 students enrolled in a prominent Malaysian ODL institution. The study used correlation and multiple regression analyses to examine the relationships between the independent variables (trust, integrity and diversity) and their effects on inclusivity. Pearson correlation coefficients showed strong positive relationships between trust and inclusivity ( $r = 0.78$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), integrity and inclusivity ( $r = 0.75$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and diversity and inclusivity ( $r = 0.71$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These results indicate a robust relationship between these institutional factors and the creation of an inclusive learning environment. A multiple regression analysis showed that trust ( $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), integrity ( $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and diversity ( $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) were significant predictors of inclusivity and together explained 62% of the variance in the inclusivity measures ( $R^2 = 0.62$ ,  $F(3, 864) = 468.73$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Among the predictor variables, trust emerged as the strongest contributor to inclusivity, emphasising the critical role of building and maintaining trust in ODL environments. Integrity and diversity were significant but had comparatively smaller effects. These findings provide valuable insights for policy makers and ODL practitioners and emphasise the need for a multi-faceted approach to promoting inclusivity. By enhancing trust, promoting integrity and fostering diversity, ODL institutions can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Future research could build on these findings to explore specific interventions to further promote inclusion and learning success in different ODL contexts.

**Keywords:** Open and distance learning, Inclusivity, trust, integrity, diversity, Malaysia

## 1. Introduction

The higher education sector has undergone massive changes in the last few years and Open Distance learning (ODL) seem to be one of major delivery mechanisms. Yet, this significant trend has broader consequences in developing nations like Malaysia where ODL is crucial to massify higher education and lifelong learning. This is necessary because the ODL institutions deal with a wide range of students having different needs, views and methods to learn. Such a measure is guided by the theme of "fidelity-in-diversity," emphasizing that educational institutions are charged to maintain their mission and philosophy while growing more diverse on race, class or any other defining demographic parameters.

Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate three important components in building an inclusive environment in the Malaysian ODL context: trust (T), integrity (I) and diversity (D). By examining these relationships, we can guide policy makers and practitioners in developing a more inclusive and effective ODL environment.

Malaysia has made fabulous progress in the application and institutionalisation of ODL. Open University Malaysia (OUM) is an exceptional example for others to follow. Founded in 2000, OUM has been a leader in providing broader access to higher education, particularly among working adults and individuals residing

far from cities. While the student body is now more diverse, a key issue early in 2018 will be how to accommodate and educate them. Their view is that the current COVID-19 pandemic has merely expedited this evolution and brought to the fore some of the advantages and disadvantages associated with ODL in Malaysia. Now, as these institutions attempt to make this paradigm shift, questions of trust and integrity arise for some of them as the fabric that holds their campus communities together in an increasingly polarised world is very thin. The study also comes at a critical time as we wrestle with how these elements can work together to create learning environments that truly deliver on the promise of accessibility and inclusivity.

Teaching and learning through ODL is becoming increasingly important in the Malaysian higher education context and there is not enough research on factors that could become inclusive. While there are previous studies that have looked at student satisfaction and academic achievement in ODL, there is limited research on the role of trust, integrity and diversity elements in promoting a good inclusive learning environment. Through an extensive review of the literature it was obvious that this gap is crucial given the specific difficulties ODL institutions face in terms building a community and creating a sense of belonging amongst widely distributed, diverse student cohorts. Institutions need to learn how these elements are related for student inclusivity, so they can design effective interventions which help all learners.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions (RQ):

- RQ1: What are the relationships between trust, integrity, diversity and inclusivity in Malaysian ODL institutions?
- RQ2: To what extent do trust, integrity and diversity predict inclusivity in ODL environments?
- RQ3: Which of the factors of trust, integrity and diversity has the strongest influence on promoting inclusivity in ODL?

This study will contribute to the field of inclusiveness in ODL, and are novel for discussing trust, integrity and diversity within a partnership. Thus, the implications of our findings are also practical and relevant to ODL institutions embarking on an endeavour to develop inclusive learning spaces for everyone. It provides important insights for policy makers who can develop evidence-based strategies to improve the quality and inclusiveness of ODL in Malaysia and potentially in other developing countries. Furthermore, this study sheds light on how institutions can adhere to their original ideals while accommodating the interests of a more diverse student body by examining "fidelity in diversity". This approach may be useful not only to understand ODL practises, but also to broaden the horizons of inclusivity in higher education.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Open and distance learning in Malaysia*

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) has become an important educational pathway in Malaysia as an alternative to higher education programmes for lifelong learning. Researcher Chung et al., (2020) notes that ODL has taken off in Malaysia since the early 2000s and OUM is one of the key institutions contributing to this expansion. ODL has already been validated by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) as a legitimate and quality-assured form of educational delivery, giving it an even more secure place in Malaysia's higher education system.

ODL programmes are generally characterised by their flexibility. The growth of ODL in Malaysia can be described as a flexible approach to learning as students demand programmes that allow them to balance their studies with other commitments (Yunyan et al., 2024). Secondly, the integration of technology; Malaysian ODL institutions have proposed various educational technologies to enhance the learning experience (T Subramaniam et al., 2019). There is a wide spectrum of students who are attracted to ODL, including working adults, rural dwellers and those seeking career advancement (Naveed et al., 2021).

However, the rapid expansion of ODL has also brought challenges, particularly in ensuring quality and inclusivity for different student groups (Humbhi & Tareen, 2022).

## *2.2 Inclusiveness in ODL*

Inclusive education means that all students with disabilities, Indigenous students and students from diverse backgrounds are welcomed and included in the learning environment to ensure the success of every learner and every person as they are entitled to on the basis of the right to access. In the ODL context, inclusion takes on added meaning when considering that learners are not with their teachers and classmates, nor are they of the same age or social background. In the ODL context, Arnaiz Sánchez et al., (2019) also asserts that inclusive education is about overcoming barriers to learning and participation so that everyone has a chance to succeed. It is about accessibility, cultural sensitivity and supporting different learning styles.

Research by Solheim & Moss, (2023) highlights the aspects of inclusiveness in ODL. Based on this research, four key aspects are considered crucial for successful inclusive education: Course design and easy-to-understand learning materials, a culturally sensitive teaching style, appropriate support services, including those specifically tailored to the needs of students with disabilities, and interaction between different students. When all of these aspects are considered, a balanced and inclusive learning experience that leaves no student behind in distance education becomes possible. However, there are unique barriers to realising inclusivity in ODL environments. However, the lack of face-to-face interaction poses a challenge when it comes to fostering a sense of engagement and belonging to an educational community (Farley & Burbules, 2022). Technological barriers and varying levels of digital literacy among students exacerbate inequality in access (Luong & Arnold, 2020).

## *2.3 Trust in ODL*

In an educational environment, trust is a necessary attribute to develop, particularly in ODL where there is less face-to-face interaction. According to Archer-Kuhn & MacKinnon, (2020) trust can be defined as students' belief or confidence in their institution to provide them with quality education and support during their learning process. The multi-dimensional nature of this trust includes the trustworthiness of the institution in terms of familiarity and quality, but also the effectiveness of the courses with the assurance that assessment and grading practises are handled equally fairly and that there are strong privacy protections that students can terminate at any time as part of the transparency of this online world. Taken together, these elements help to develop and maintain the trust that is so important to the engagement and satisfaction of students participating in ODL programmes. The management of these elements can create an environment of trust and thus promote student engagement, which in turn epitomises the distance learning experience.

Research by Karaoglan-Yilmaz et al., (2024) shows that there is a strong positive relationship between trust and student engagement and satisfaction in distance learning. The importance of trust as a key to shaping student interactions and outcomes in distance education should not be underestimated in this context. Furthermore, Nortvig et al., (2018) found that trust in the institution and instructors helps to reduce online learners' sense of isolation. The research also found that this trust improves student' sense of belonging, which is an important factor for completion and success in online learning communities. Building trust in ODL environments is not an accident, but a deliberate, strategic and ongoing task that educational institutions must embrace. Researchers Dżimińska et al., (2018) outline a number of initiatives to promote trust, such as creating transparent lines of communication between the institution and students. They also emphasise that support services should be seamless in order to respond to student academic or technological issues as quickly and reliably as possible. Secondly, the researchers emphasise that secure and reliable technology is essential for the quality of learning and the protection of students' data; this technological reliability reflects the trust that students have in the institution.

These findings suggest that trust is a multidimensional concept in ODL that goes beyond learners' confidence in educational content and processes and also reflects their belief in the integrity of an institution and its technological infrastructure. The importance of trust in these educational scenarios cannot be underestimated, especially as ODL is gaining more importance and urgency than ever as global events have made the proliferation of online learning the new norm. Institutions that focus on trust in all these dimensions are likely to achieve better student outcomes, be more satisfied and provide a healthier online learning community.

#### *2.4 Integrity in ODL*

Researcher Marais, (2022) note that integrity in ODL is a broad field that encompasses both academic and institutional integrity. In other words, academic integrity is our honesty in conducting an academic endeavour and institutional integrity has to do with the alignment that binds us to ethical norms and pedagogical values. The integrity of ODL programmes must be in place if they are to survive and secure the trust of the public, the researchers said. Aspects of integrity in ODL programmes include academic integrity by maintaining honesty and preventing plagiarism, as well as fair and transparent assessment practises, such as the ethical use of data quality assurance standards. These are the elements that create a sense of trust and credibility in an ODL institution.

Researcher Mahlangu, (2021) for example, has empirically demonstrated that integrity is critical in ODL institutions and that high levels of perceived institutional integrity correlate with student retention and academic success. This finding underscores the practical benefits of a high standard of honour in online education. In addition, Edwards & Roy, (2017) found that higher levels of leadership integrity consistently lead to more positive student confidence and engagement. These studies emphasise the importance of integrity for an effective learning environment in ODL.

Nevertheless, teaching integrity in ODL may be problematic (Van Deventer, 2011). One of the biggest challenges is how to monitor and secure credible online testing to avoid vulnerabilities in academic integrity as more and more testing is conducted remotely. Holden et al. have found that institutions have implemented short-term strategies in response to these challenges. These may be technological in nature, such as using proctoring technology to monitor online exams or detection software that informs course coordinators when unoriginal work has been submitted (e.g. Turnitin), and ensuring a strong academic integrity policy that explains what constitutes misconduct and clearly outlines responsibilities because we expect student behaviour to play an important role. They have been developed to maintain the integrity of ODL programmes while considering the characteristics that are particularly important for distance learning environments.

#### *2.5 Diversity in ODL*

According to Usher & Barak, (2020) diversity in ODL encompasses all differences among learners, including their educational backgrounds, experiences, demographic characteristics and other factors. Age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, culture of origin, and predominant educational background are just some of the dimensions that this diversity encompasses. ODL tends to have more culturally diverse student populations, resulting in a unique educational environment with inherent opportunities and limitations. On the one hand, it provides fertile ground for intercultural learning and cross-fertilisation of perspectives that can contribute to a higher quality of education for all involved. However, it also presents some difficulties when it comes to individual learning needs and preferences that may lead to culture clashes.

Bornschlegl & Caltabiano, (2022) in their study of diversity in ODL have explored that there is a wide spectrum of benefits associated with diverse student cohorts and have shown that they have the ability to develop culturally competent students by providing access to myriad perspectives and experiences. Such engagement can broaden students' worldviews, promote cultural competence, and contribute to the education of global professionals. However, Broderick, (2020) warn that a diversity of ODL environments

can lead to feelings of isolation and marginalisation among students if left unchecked. This is an example of the urgent need for well-structured environments and all-encompassing pedagogical practises in ODL contexts.

According to Herzog, (2022) successfully managing diversity in ODL requires a concerted interdisciplinary approach. Practises from this perspective include culturally sensitive teaching that incorporates different languages and knowledge structures for students from different cultural backgrounds, diversified curriculum representation to ensure that all are reflected in course content, and student-centred support services. Through these practises, ODL institutions can develop a comprehensive educational infrastructure that not only accepts but also promotes diversity by providing opportunities for all students to learn and contribute to their community. It not only provides a solution to bridging the gender gap, but also fully realises the potential benefits and provides an inclusive, diverse form of learning in the ODL environment.

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1 Research Design*

The study utilised a quantitative research method to measure trust, integrity, diversity and inclusivity in the context of open distance learning (ODL) in Malaysia. The data were collected from a large population of ODL students at one point in time using a cross-sectional survey. This design aimed to examine the relationships between the variables and use regression analysis to determine how trustworthiness, integrity and diversity can contribute to an organisation becoming inclusive.

#### *3.2 Population and Sample*

The target population of this study consisted of students pursuing an ODL degree at the Open University Malaysia (OUM). There were about 70,000 on-campus and ODL students in Open University Malaysia (OUM) during the study. Stratified random sampling was used to obtain a representative sample based on programme of study, year level and demographic characteristics. The population was stratified first by program type (diploma, degree, master's, PhD), by year level (1-5) and key demographic characteristics (sex and age group). Participants from each stratum were then randomly chosen by size of the stratum in the population. This maintained representation in all the main groups of licensees. For correlation and multiple regression analysis, this final sample size of 861 was determined using G\*Power analysis with a confidence level of 95% (and width or margin of error  $\pm 3\%$ ). The study was conducted among 861 students. The sample size was determined by a G-Power analysis with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of  $\pm 3\%$ . This is an appropriate sample size for the analyses planned here (Cohen, 1988), which include correlation and multiple regression.

#### *3.3 Instrumentation*

The research instrument used was an exclusive questionnaire containing five different sub-constructs, namely demographic data, the Trust in ODL (TOT) scale, the Perceived Integrity Scale (PIS), the Experience of Diversity Scale (DES) and the Perception of Inclusion Scale (IP). All the scales were adapted and adopted from Gottfredson., et al (1999), School Diversity Inventory (SDI) and self-developed by Rosinah, (2019) for the variables of trust and integrity. For all scales except the demographic section, responses were generally given on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral [neither agree nor strongly disagree]; 4 = agree; and 5 = strongly agree). They conducted these assessments using instruments derived from existing validated scales and contextualised specifically for Malaysian ODL environments. To test the reliability and validity of the questionnaires, a pilot test was conducted with 30 students using self-administered questionnaires. The reliability of each scale was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which were above 0.80 for all scales, thus fulfilling the criteria for high reliability according to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). The development and review of the questionnaire to ensure

that it is sufficiently robust from a scientific perspective has resulted in the instrument validly measuring the constructs of trust, integrity, diversity and inclusiveness in the Malaysian ODL environment.

Table 1. Alpha Cronbach for each Instrument

Variables	Alpha Cronbach
Trust	0.840
Integrity	0.768
Diversity	0.748
Inclusivity	0.730

Table 1 shows the total item statistics and reliability analysis for the Trust, Diversity, Integrity and Inclusiveness of Learning Organisation scale in Malaysian ODL institutions. The total scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.800 and a value of 0.901 after standardisation, indicating good consistency between all these variables. The Cronbach's alpha values for all variables were: 0.730 to 0.840. These values indicate that each of the four variables makes a significant contribution to the overall variable. Trust had the highest Cronbach's alpha of 0.840 and would lead to a decrease in the reliability of this scale if it were removed (alpha at removal: 0.722), showing its fundamental role in the scale used here. The item "Integrity" has a high Cronbach's alpha = 0.768, but is also the only one that would be differentially combined (which probably explains it) and its removal increases the alpha to 0.874. Given these initial results, one could surmise that this universe comprises a homogeneous ensemble in terms of confidence and diversity in terms of integrity and inclusiveness in the assessment of ODL constructs measured by items that relate equally to both items based on the factorial variances.

### 3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected over the course of an academic semester over a period of six weeks. The web-based questions were asked via a Google form that was emailed to the selected participants, followed by reminders at weekly intervals. A follow-up email was sent to all selected participants with an invitation and a link to the questionnaire were sent to their university email addresses. To get a higher response rate, we sent reminder emails in every week across six weeks. However, reminders were sent only to those who had not completed the survey (as you can follow-up answers data through Google Formans). Certain safeguards we put in place included requiring all items to be responded; inclusion of attention check questions. A survey of 30 students to test clarity and functionality of the questions was also implemented as a part of piloting full deployment. Ethical requirements by providing an information sheet explaining the nature of the study, assurances of confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation. An electronic consent form was given to participants prior to accessing the questionnaire

### 3.5 Data Analysis

The results were analysed in two stages, through a statistical approach using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 and further SEM analyses use IBM AMOS 26. The results were analysed using SPSS, including the data for the demographic findings, testing the data for reliability (Cronbach's alpha), Pearson correlation to assess the relationships between the variables and hierarchical multiple regression to determine the predictive power of trust, integrity and diversity in relation to inclusivity using SEM AMOS. In this way, a generalised model of the relationships between the variables was created. These were subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis for the construct validity of the model and a structural model test to examine the hypothesised relationships and assess the fit of the models using several indices (Chi-square/ df, CFI, TLI, RMSEA SRMR). Such an integrated analysis strategy provides a deep insight into the multiple dimensions and relationships between trust, integrity, diversity and inclusivity in the Malaysian ODL sector, thus providing empirical evidence to answer the research questions and objectives of this study.



## 4.0 Findings

The data provided shows a breakdown of student demographics into three different categories: Gender, level of study, year of study. The gender distribution is not exactly balanced at 24.6%: Women are in the majority among students (about six times more than male students in the total student population). In terms of level of study, the majority study a diploma programme (43.7%, 377 students), followed by a degree programme (29.8%, 257 students), a master's programme (24.9% or 215 students) and a small proportion of PHD programmes (1.3%, 11 degrees). This distribution for an academic year shows a significantly larger cohort size from the first year onwards (66.2%, 571 students), with all other years decreasing in parallel: Year 2 (11.2%, 97 students), Year 3 (9.6%, 83 students), Year 4 and especially in the fifth year the proportion is lowest (1%, 24%).

Table 2. Demographic profile

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	202	23.4
	Female	660	76.6
Level of Study	Degree	377	43.7
	Diploma	257	29.8
	Master	215	24.9
	PhD	11	1.3
Year of Study	Year 1	571	66.2
	Year 2	97	11.2
	Year 3	83	9.6
	Year 4	79	9.2
	Year 5	24	2.8

*RQ1: What are the relationships between trust, integrity, diversity and inclusivity in Malaysian ODL institutions?*

Table 3. Pearson Correlation

Variables	Trust	Diversity	Integrity	Inclusivity
<b>Trust</b>	1			
<b>Diversity</b>	0.688**	1		
<b>Integrity</b>	0.789**	0.611**	1	
<b>Inclusivity</b>	0.709**	0.704**	0.672**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In the context of Malaysian ODL institutions, trust and integrity were found to have significant positive relationships in addition to diversity and inclusivity as shown in the correlation matrix. Trust and Integrity are most strongly related at 0.789, indicating a fairly linear relationship between these two functions. They were also positively correlated with inclusivity (0.709) and diversity (0.688). Integrity has a very strong influence on Inclusivity (0.672) and a moderate influence on Diversity (0.611). Diversity and inclusion have a positive correlation (0.704).

This finding indicates a strong relationship between these four factors and the Malaysian ODL environment. The high correlation between Trust and Integrity indicates that cultivating either of the two values can largely improve complementarity. The statistical significance of all correlations is  $p < 0.001$ , which gives us a high degree of confidence in these relationships. This intertwining only emphasises the possibility of a holistic approach to improving ODL, where increasing one value can improve all other values.

*RQ2: To what extent do trust, integrity and diversity predict inclusivity in ODL environments?*

Table 4: Summary of the model for Trust, Integrity, Diversity and Inclusivity

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.782a	.611	.609	3.59499	.611	449.355	3	859	.000

*a Predictors: (Constant), Trust, Diversity, Integrity*

*b*

*Dependent Variable: Inclusivity*

The model summary of the regression shows in Table 4 how trust, integrity and diversity play a role in inclusiveness in ODL environments. This model explains 61.1% of the variance in our unit test results (R-squared) with an R-value of 0.782, showing a strong predictive relationship. This means that trust, integrity and diversity together explain 61.1% of the variance in inclusiveness, which is a high value indeed. Even after controlling for the number of predictors, this model can still be accepted. Significant group differences are also evident in the results of the E Change statistic: 448.583,  $F = 449.355$ ;  $p = .000$  shows that this model is statistically significant. The scores for trust, integrity and diversity have a significant and positive combined impact on facilitating inclusiveness in ODL environments, which is the main objective of the study. Thus, the high R-squared value indicates that these dimensions are important for creating more inclusive ODL environments.

*RQ3: Which of the factors of trust, integrity and diversity has the strongest influence on promoting inclusivity in ODL?*

The path diagram, which includes structural equation modelling, provides new insights into how integrity, trust and diversity influence inclusivity in ODL. The model appears to be a reasonable fit to the data (RMSEA = 0.076; other indices near or above the recommended cut-off > than 90). The model shows that trust has the strongest direct influence on inclusiveness (0.81), followed by diversity (0.72) and integrity (0.65). There is also a strong correlation between trust and integrity (0.92), trust and diversity (0.81) and integrity and diversity (0.81). These results show that these constructs are interrelated and that it is important to promote an inclusive ODL environment.

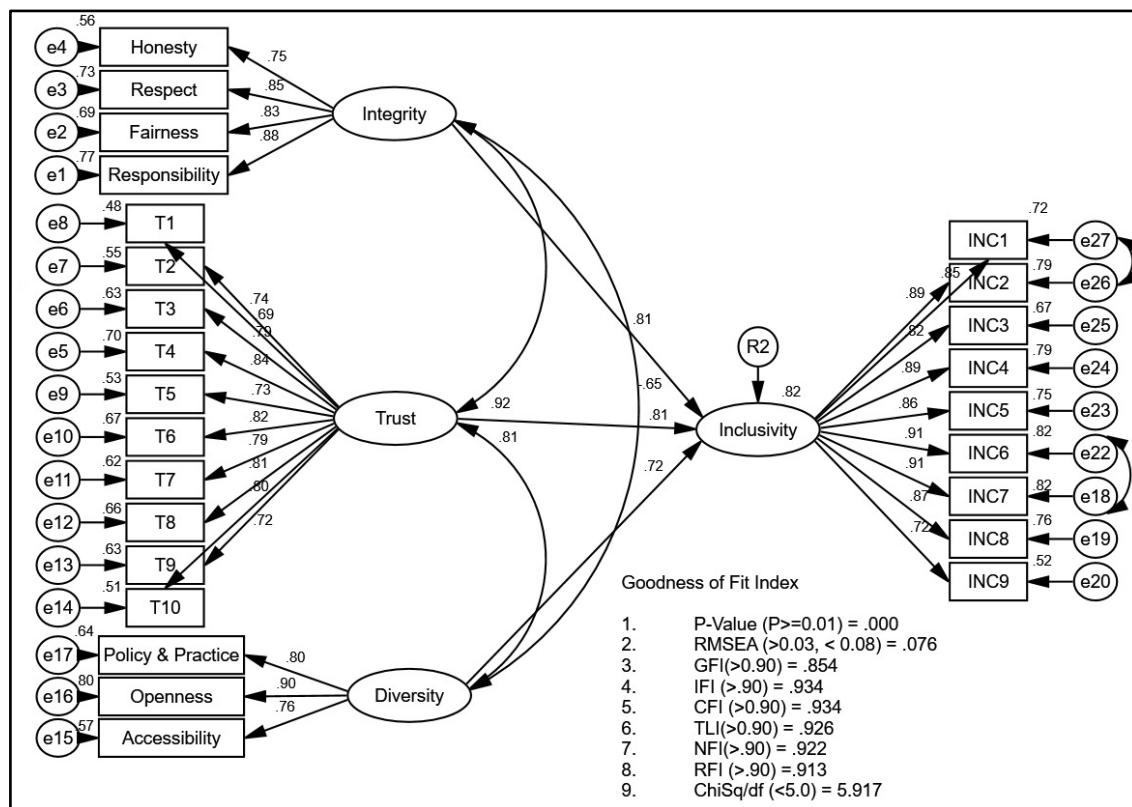


Figure 1: Path analysis of the structural model of the relationships between Trust, Integrity, Diversity and Inclusivity

## Discussions

This study contributes to the understanding of the relationship between trust, integrity, diversity and inclusiveness in Malaysian ODL institutions. All four constructs show a strong positive correlation, suggesting that there may be synergistic effects where improvements in one aspect have a positive impact on the others. Although the strong relationship between trust and integrity shows that these ethical aspects are of great importance in creating a healthy environment in an ODL process. This is in line with previous theoretical work by Harrison & Laco, (2022) who argued that trust and integrity are central to fostering effective virtual learning communities.

The strong correlation between diversity and inclusivity argues for an interdependence of the two concepts in ODL. This is complementary to Sanger, (2020) who argue that inclusive learning environments are a natural outcome of diversity. Despite uniformity, integrity was significantly negatively associated with support for human rights and both egalitarian motives, a large correlation in the case of equality. More needs to be discovered about this more nuanced relationship, which is also consistent with the subtle role that Lim, (2024) describe for ethical leadership in educational institutions. Taken together, these findings emphasise the need for a comprehensive approach to improving ODL quality in Malaysian higher education (including the sector), with improvements on each of these fronts having a positive impact on the overall learning environment.

The results of the regression model help to provide new insights into trust, integrity and diversity as predictors of inclusivity in ODL institutions. These three factors together account for 61.1% of the variance in inclusivity, so they have a strong predictive relationship ( $R\text{-squared} = 0.611$ ). This result emphasises the importance of trust, credibility and diversity in developing an inclusive ODL environment. These findings are consistent with recent work by Lim, (2024) who emphasise the interdependence of these influences on inclusive learning environments. Indeed, the high predictive power of these variables indicates that certain institutions would be well positioned to significantly improve inclusivity within their ODL programmes by

focusing on building trust, promoting integrity and fostering diversity. Trust, integrity, and diversity are important predictors of inclusivity in ODL contexts, but the model may be incomplete or other unmeasured variables may also contribute to fostering a sense of acceptance among learners. As Jiang et al., (2021) highlighted in their study on online learning communities, additional factors such as technological availability, cultural competence or the ability to meaningfully include all learners despite their diversity, as well as new pedagogical practises could contribute. Further factors could be explored in future research to deepen our understanding of inclusivity in the context of ODL. The higher ability to predict retention by these three factors suggests that a holistic thinking process should be applied in the design and implementation of ODL.

Higher education institutions and policy makers must work together to remove the above barriers if full inclusivity is to be the ultimate goal of ODL. Building trust is key to transparent communication, reliable learning experiences and prompt support for students. Equally important is improving integrity measures through transparent policies, promoting empathy (respect and fairness), accountability and regular training on the ethics of the organisation. Comprehensive policies, an open learning environment and regular assessments of accessibility features available in ODL platforms will also improve the impact on diversity. Strategies need to be developed that emphasise the importance of trust, integrity and diversity in the provision of ODL, as well as the necessary resources for all institutions. The findings provide important insights into how ODL institutions and policy makers can develop inclusive online learning environments that meet the needs of diverse student groups.

The implications of the findings for ODL universities and policy formulation are the strong impact of trust on inclusivity coupled with the fact that transparent communication and trustworthy learning experiences should be prioritised (Huda, 2024). The notion that something can be achieved with a few aggressive sideswipes at diversity and People of Colour suggests that the opposite is required and holistic strategies for equality are needed. The need to apply holistic approaches to creating digitally inclusive learning environments. In addition, the structural model and the high loadings of each construct provide a basis for developing interventions to measure the constructs. For example, the construct integrity showed high loadings for respect, fairness and responsibility, suggesting that these aspects should be emphasised when building integrity initiatives (Klimchak et al., 2020). Overall, these empirical findings contribute to developing robust evidence-based policies and practises that can be implemented in ODL environments aimed at promoting inclusivity, building trust, establishing honest relationships, and fostering integrity with diversity to achieve better service in ODL educational environments.

## **Conclusions**

To summarise, this study makes an important contribution to our understanding of the complex relationships between trust and integrity in ODL environments, as well as issues of diversity and inclusivity. Structural equation modelling shows that these variables are highly interrelated, especially in the case of trust as the best predictor of inclusivity. These combined results confirm the value of a broader view in creating an inclusive ODL environment and suggest that approaches to trust and integrity should not be considered in isolation, but more are interrelated. These findings therefore provide compelling, evidence-based outcomes for both ODL institutions and those informing policy around them to improve inclusivity by focusing on building trust within their organisation, while transparency and integrity go hand in hand and holistic diversity strategies are implemented. As the whole world turns to digital learning, these insights will become increasingly important for understanding the design of online environments. If we do this well, ODL can become more inclusive and equitable than it currently is by developing a stronger set of mechanisms to ensure access with quality in the evolving age of digital learning.

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# The Impact of Psychophysical Well-being and Performance among Malaysian University Athletes

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationships between anxiety, anger, depression, stress, and academic achievement among Malaysian university athletes. Data was collected from 344 student-athletes from various universities in Malaysia using validated psychophysical assessment scales. Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant positive correlations between all psychophysical constructs, with the strongest correlation between stress and depression ( $r = 0.923$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Structural equation modelling demonstrated good fit ( $\chi^2 = 3.82$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0.148$ ; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.067), with stress emerging as a central factor directly influencing anxiety ( $\beta = 0.67$ ), depression ( $\beta = 0.96$ ), and anger ( $\beta = 0.86$ ). The expanded model incorporating academic achievement showed weak direct effects of psychophysical constructs on academic performance, with anger having a small negative effect ( $\beta = -0.14$ ). The model achieved excellent fit indices (CFI = 0.989, TLI = 0.981, RMSEA = 0.066). These findings highlight the interconnected nature of psychophysical distress factors in student-athletes and suggest complex, indirect pathways between psychophysical well-being and academic achievement. The results underscore the importance of comprehensive stress management interventions in university athletic programs to promote overall psychophysical well-being and academic success among student-athletes.

**Keywords:** Student-athletes, Perceived social support, Mental health, Athletic identity, Structural equation modelling (SEM)

## 1. Introduction

In the competitive world of university athletics, the psychophysical well-being of student-athletes plays a crucial role in determining their performance both on and off the field. The intricate interplay between various psychophysical constructs such as anxiety, anger, depression, and stress can significantly influence an athlete's ability to perform at their potential. This study explores into the complex relationships between these psychophysical well-being factors among Malaysian university athletes, offering valuable insights into the mental health landscape of this unique population. The transition to university life presents a huge challenge for students, and these are often amplified for student-athletes who must balance rigorous academic demands with intensive athletic training and competition. The pressure to excel can create a problem towards of psychophysical well-being, potentially leading to negative emotional states that may influences athletic performance and overall well-being.

This study seeks to elucidate the complex relationships between anxiety, anger, depression and stress amongst the student- athletes. It is aim to explore these associations in order to highlight key features that may play into psychophysical issues or disrupt academic performance ability. This research is important

in designing interventions and support systems for student athlete mental health & well-being. The study is multidimensional and employs validated psychophysical assessment scales, in-depth statistical analyses including Pearson correlations, multiple regression rounds, and structural equation models to present a nuanced view of collective psyche. In this way, it is hope to gauge not only the presence and severity of these psychophysical constructs, but also their intricate interactions with one another as well as epistemic pathways that may be involved in mediating or producing them. These study finds have far reaching possibilities for college athletic programs, coaching sports psychologists and the athletes themselves. These results highlight the central role of stress and its effects on other negative emotional states in this research, as well as provide further support for targeted interventions geared towards preventing maladaptive reactions to stressful experiences among student-athletes.

These are the goals of this study, specifically:

1. To investigate the relationships between psychophysical well-being factors (stress, depression, anxiety, and anger) and academic achievement among student-athletes.
2. To determine the contributions of stress, depression and anger in predicting anxiety and academic achievement among student-athletes.
3. To examine the mediating factors between psychophysical distress (stress, depression, anxiety, and anger) towards academic achievement among student-athletes.

## **2. Background and Literature Review**

In the academic field of sports psychology, research interest in examining athlete mental health and well-being has grown considerably over recent decades. Multiple studies have pointed out the specific burdens experienced by student-athletes, who are confronted with pressures in school and on their team simultaneously (Etzel 2009; Sudano et al. 2017). With the constant pressure, time management challenges and physical as well as psychophysical demands of sport; this population is at a higher risk for mental health problems like distress in comparison to any other population (Humphrey et al., 2013).

### *2.1 Anxiety in Athletes*

Importantly, anxiety is normal among athletes and usually presents as a combination of cognitive concern and somatic symptoms (Martens et al., 1990). Similarly, to fear and excitement, a level of performance anxiety can be invaluable. However, an excessive amount has been linked with lack of concentration (focus), poor decision-making as well as physical skills deficits (Woodman & Hardy 2003). Competition level, gender, and type of sport have also been identified as variables affecting anxiety in student-athletes (Patel et al., 2010).

The presence of competition has been found to be motivator for anxiety in athletes, where student-athletes with high level or participation were more motivated by competitive sports and hence experienced higher levels for performance anxiety than non-competitive sports (Patel et al., 2010). Even in simple terms, sports that focus on individual performance tend to trigger greater anxiety compared with team sports and this is sometimes attributed to the added weight of personal responsibility and spotlight effect (Ramis et al., 2015). The pressures on student-athletes, academics and athletics compromises anxiety levels (Comeaux & Harrison, 2011). Personality and cognitive appraisals According to recent research perfectionism and fear of failure play an important role in explaining anxiety among athletes, with the result that personality traits not only change irrational beliefs dependent on competitiveness but also influence individual levels of state-anxiety (Sagar & Stoeber, 2009).

### *2.2 Anger and Athletic Performance*

Although anger was involved in emotional domain, often ignored in sport psychology, its effects on performance are both subtle and salient. While anxiety of all sorts has been well-studied in the context of sport, anger has flown a bit more under the radar. Recent research suggests, that while anger can have healthy as well as harmful effects on performance in sport (Robazza & Bortoli, 2007), the impact of trait and state experiences positioned within a situational self-regulatory perspective are individually based across sports. The co-existence of these two faces poses a major challenge to simplistic formulations of anger, and underscores the importance for providing an indigenized approach in gaining insight into how sports people discipline their emotions.



The link between anger and sport is complex, as it can either be a motivator to perform better or an unnecessary distraction on performance. In sports based on predominantly forceful movements or combative, anger gets used by some athletes to drive them forward and make use of it as a source for enhanced effort, motivation (Lane et al., 2011) & power output. In contrast, for other performers or in alternative performance contexts anger might increase loss of control and poor decision-making which paradoxically leads to degraded athletic results (Davis et al., 2010). The variability in outcomes highlight the crucial role of emotion processing and regulation as an individual difference. Nicholls et al., (2010) suggested that personality characteristics, cognitive appraisal styles and sport specific coping strategies would all determine whether anger improves or hampers performance in a competitive situation. This knowledge is necessary not only for the individualization of specific mental performance-related interventions or training to target emotion regulation among competitive athletes, but also matching strategies and approaches that may be optimal before corrective actions are taken.

### *2.3 Depression in Student-Athletes*

Depression among student-athletes has emerged as a significant concern in recent years, challenging the often-romanticized notion of the resilient, mentally tough athlete. Contrary to popular belief, student-athletes are not only susceptible to depression but may, in fact, be at higher risk compared to their non-athlete peers (Wolanin et al., 2015). This heightened vulnerability stems from a unique confluence of stressors inherent to the dual role of student and athlete. The pressure to excel both academically and athletically, coupled with the physical demands of training and competition, creates a high-stress environment that can precipitate or exacerbate depressive symptoms (Armstrong & Oomen-Early, 2009). Moreover, the cultural expectations surrounding athleticism and mental toughness may inadvertently create barriers to seeking help, leading to underreporting and delayed intervention (Gulliver et al., 2012).

The manifestation of depression in student-athletes often presents unique challenges in terms of recognition and treatment. The symptoms may be masked by or mistaken for the physical fatigue associated with intense training regimens, making early detection difficult (Yang et al., 2007). Additionally, the time constraints imposed by rigorous academic and athletic schedules can limit opportunities for self-care and seeking professional help. Research has identified several risk factors specific to this population, including injury, performance pressures, identity foreclosure, and social isolation from non-athlete peers (Proctor & Boan-Lenzo, 2010). Gender differences have also been observed, with female student-athletes generally reporting higher rates of depressive symptoms than male (Wolanin et al., 2016). These findings underscore the need for targeted mental health interventions and support systems tailored to the unique needs of student-athletes, emphasizing the importance of a holistic approach to athlete well-being that addresses both physical and mental health concerns.

### *2.4 Stress in the Athletic Context*

Stress is a pervasive and multi-dimensional experience in the lives of student-athletes, touching many aspects of their academic, athletic, and personal selves. The specialized pressures experienced by this demographic lead to a nuanced stress response that deviates from the traditional sources of stress seen in non-athlete students. Student-athletes may perceive multiple and interconnected sources for stress from academic pressures, athletic performance expectations, training demands (Giacobbi et al., 2004) or social relationships within the sport context as well apart of it. This confluence of stressors also can eventually lead the person to exceed his/her capacity for coping. The intensity and frequency of stress student-athletes experience varies throughout the academic year, as well as within competitive seasons with peaks often identified during critical periods in academics (e.g., test taking) and when facing high-stakes competitions Papanikolaou et al.

The effects of chronic stress can be dire for student-athletes and are more than just temporary discomfort. Burnout, defined by high levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Gould & Whitley, 2009), each symptoms outlet in increased duration or intensity when exposed to chronic stressors. Stress can also have a negative impact on athletic performance leading to lower focus, poor decision-making processes and increased physical deficits (Fletcher & Scott, 2010). Of special relevance to the relationship between stress and injury risk, a significant body of research

indicates that augmented amounts of life stress could lead to escalated susceptibilities towards both acute as well as overuse injuries (Williams & Andersen, 1998). This interaction between stress and other psychophysical components; anxiety, depression, self-efficacy is further highlighted here to show the complex nature of stress in respect to a more holistic approach towards applying this theoretical model within sport. Understanding how sources may work together can provide a more holistic view of the types and quantities of stressors student-athletes face, which is needed to create focused interventions designed to support an athlete based on their full pattern of distress.

### *2.5 Psychophysical Well Being with Academic Achievement among the Student-Athletes at University*

In recent years, the psychophysical well-being and academic achievement of student-athletes in university settings has emerged as a critical issue that cannot be ignored due to an apparently complex interplay between psychophysical placebo effects for example mental perception triggers, biological treatment responses with histrionic manifested potentiated skills testing-edginess spectrum strains apparent only within this infected population. Student-athletes negotiate unique challenges when attempting to balance the demands of a rigorous academic curriculum and an equally demanding practice or competition schedule, which increases their stress levels (Comeaux & Harrison, 2011), time management struggles consistently ranked amongst key factors in school-related success among student athletes. Enormous research has consistently shown that psychophysical health affecting academic performance is often paramount for this specific population (Armstrong & Oomen-Early, 2009). Indeed, research has found that student-athletes with greater psychophysical well-being are more likely to perform better academically for instance higher grade point averages and complete a degree (Pritchard & Wilson, 2003).

The psychophysical well-being and academic achievement correlate differently for student-athletes due to several mediators for example, social support in the forms of teammates and instructors has been shown to be an important protective factor against stress reducing academic performance (DeFreese & Smith, 2013). Moreover, the mastery of adaptive coping mechanisms and time management skills have been shown to enhance well-being as well as academic performance (Gayles & Hu, 2009). However, the athletes join athletic roles at academic expense has a negative impact on both well-being and scholastic success (Brewer et al., 1993). Research has noted the value in institutional support services such as mental health supports and customized academic tutorial to create an environment that promotes psychophysical well-being but also tailored for student-athlete needs (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2018). This is important for the development of holistic support programs, which can be designed to promote both student-athletes' well-being and their academic achievement in the university context.

## **3. Methodology**

### *3.1 Participants*

The study sample consisted of 344 student-athletes (age range: 18-25 years,  $M = 20.7$ ,  $SD = 1.8$ ) from various public universities in Malaysia. Participants were recruited from a diverse range of sports, including both individual and team sports. The sample included 190 male and 154 female athletes, representing a balanced gender distribution. All participants were active members of their university's athletic programs and had been competing at the university level for at least one academic year.

### *3.2 Instrumentation*

The constructs were measured by using four validated psychophysical assessment scales. Anxiety: Anxiety was measured with the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI; Spielberger, 1983). The STAI is a 40-item, state anxiety and trait version consisting of two equivalent self-report scales in measuring the levels that effecting on sensations. Responses are in a 4-point Likert scale. Anger: A meta-analysis published in 2015 reported that anger was more related to bullying than the other emotions (Gini, Albiero, Benelli & Altoè) and it is generally measured by The State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory-2 STAXI-2; Spielberger). This 57-item inventory evaluates the intensity of experienced anger and how often subjects experience state or trait anger as well as in which manner they express this emotion. Depression: The Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI II, (Beck et al., 1996), as well come to test for depressive symptoms. A 21-

item self-report inventory used to measure the severity of depression in adults over the past two weeks. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen et al., 1983) was used to assess perceived stress. Measures of stress: The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)-10 item; A scale for measuring the appraisal of life events as overwhelming, controllability and important for each item, the scales were translated into Bahasa Malaysia and back-translated for language validity. The pilot test was conducted with a small group of Malaysian student-athletes to assess how well they understood and could relate culturally.

### 3.3 Procedure

After obtaining ethical approval from the university's Institutional Review Board, participants were recruited through coordination with university athletic departments. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. The psychophysical assessment scales were administered in a quiet, controlled environment under the supervision of trained research assistants. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and were given the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis with IBM SPSS Statistics 26 and AMOS 26. The analysis was conducted in stages. A series of Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to explore the bivariate links between these dimensions: anxiety, anger, depression and stress. We carried out multiple regression analysis to explore the most powerful predictors of anxiety amidst other psychophysical constructs. We used structural equation modelling (SEM) to evaluate a theoretical model based on the interrelations of these four constructs. Multiple fit indices were examined for the model validity, including chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant positive correlations between all four psychophysical constructs (Table 1). This correlation matrix presents the relationships between five constructs: Anxiety (AX), Anger (AG), Depression (D), Stress (S), and Academic Achievement (AA). The output reveals strong positive correlations among the psychophysical distress factors. Specifically, stress shows the strongest correlation with depression ( $r = 0.923$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating a very high positive relationship. Anger is also strongly correlated with depression ( $r = 0.853$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and stress ( $r = 0.828$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Anxiety, while still strongly correlated with the other psychophysical factors, shows slightly lower correlation coefficients (ranging from  $r = 0.720$  to  $r = 0.819$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Interestingly, academic achievement demonstrates weak negative correlations with all psychophysical distress factors, with the strongest negative correlation being with stress ( $r = -0.780$ , no significance level indicated). However, these negative correlations with academic achievement are notably weaker than the inter-correlations among the psychophysical distress factors, suggesting that while there may be a tendency for higher levels of psychophysical distress to be associated with lower academic achievement, this relationship is not as pronounced as the relationships among the distress factors themselves.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix of Psychophysical Constructs

Constructs	AX	AG	D	S	AA
Anxiety	1				
Anger	0.819**	1			
Depression	0.743**	0.853**	1		
Stress	0.720**	0.828**	0.923**	1	
Academic Achievement	-0.056	-0.093	-0.088	-0.780	1

\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Notes: AX: Anxiety; AG:Anger; D:Depression; S: Stress; AA: Academic Achievement

## 4.2 Structural Equation Modelling

Structural equation modelling was conducted to test a theoretical model of the interrelationships between the four psychophysical constructs. The initial model was based on the correlation and regression results, with stress hypothesized as a central factor influencing the other constructs. After minor modifications based on modification indices, the final model demonstrated good fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 3.82$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0.148$ ; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.067). The structural equation model (SEM) analysis revealed complex interrelationships among stress, depression, anxiety, and anger, along with their cognitive, physical, and psychophysical manifestations. Stress emerged as a central construct, showing strong direct effects on depression (.96), anxiety (.99), and anger (.86). These relationships underscore the pivotal role of stress in influencing various emotional and psychophysical states.

Depression, anxiety, and anger each demonstrated robust connections to their respective cognitive, physical, and psychophysical indicators, with standardized path coefficients ranging from .88 to .98. This suggests that these constructs are well-represented by their measured variables. The model also identified a moderate relationship between anger and anxiety (.74), indicating a potential feedback loop between these two states. Notably, the model achieved excellent fit indices, with a CFI of .985, TLI of .973, and RMSEA of .085, providing strong support for the proposed theoretical framework. These findings offer valuable insights into the interconnected nature of psychophysical distress and its manifestations, which could inform targeted interventions and treatment approaches.

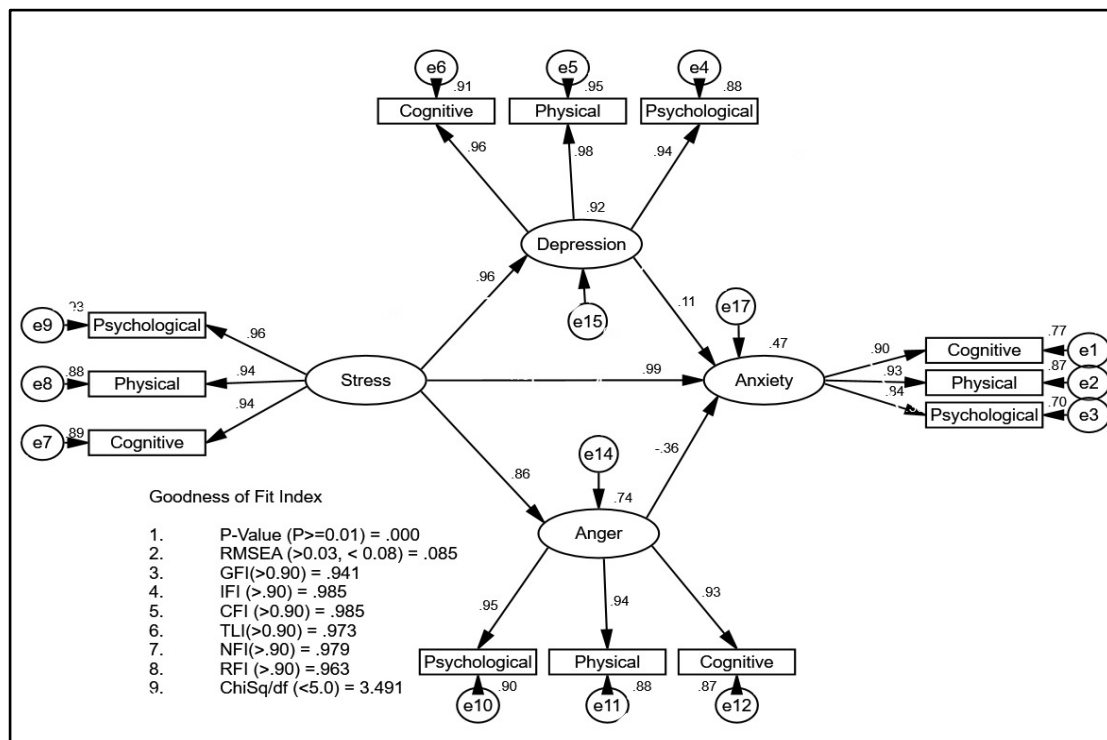


Figure 1. Structural Equation Model of Psychophysical Well Being among Malaysian University's Athletes

Figure 2 is the expanded version of new structural equation model (SEM) diagram adding more relationships and a novel outcome variable. Results of structural equation model ( $N = 344$ ). The first column with original designations displays the core relationships between stress, depression, anxiety and anger as identified in the initial structure while relating academic achievement to them. Again, stress persists in its dominant role and exerts only partial control over depression (.96), anxiety (.67), and anger (.86). Furthermore, the path coefficients of this model align with our past models; they again demonstrate a powerful and evident effect that stress has on multiple psychophysical conditions.

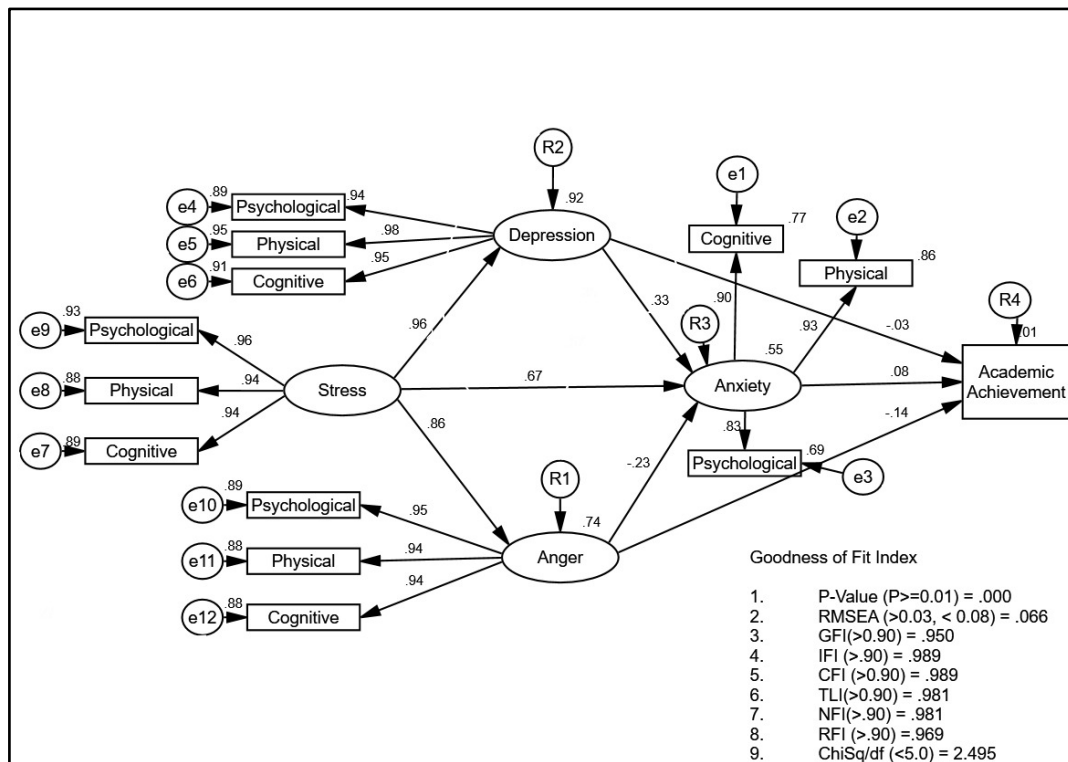


Figure 2. Expanded Structural Equation Model: Psychophysical Well Being and Academic Achievement among Malaysian University's Athletes

Similar to the earlier model, each main construct (depression, anxiety, anger, and stress) continues to show robust connections to their respective cognitive, physical, and psychophysical indicators, with standardized path coefficients ranging from .86 to .98. This consistency supports the reliability of these measured variables in representing the latent constructs across both models. A key addition in this model is the inclusion of academic achievement as an outcome variable. Interestingly, the direct effects of psychophysical constructs on academic achievement are relatively weak, with anxiety showing the strongest (albeit still modest) relationship (.08), followed by anger (-.14), while depression has a negligible direct effect (-.03). This suggests that the impact of psychophysical distress on academic performance may be more complex or indirect than initially hypothesized. The negative path coefficient (-.14) from anger to academic achievement indicates an inverse relationship. As anger increases, academic achievement tends to decrease, albeit with a small to moderate effect. This finding implies that higher levels of anger are associated with lower academic performance, potentially due to interference with concentration, difficulties in positive engagement, or behavioral issues that may disrupt the learning process. The model fit indices remain excellent, with slightly improved values compared to the previous model (CFI = .989, TLI = .981, RMSEA = .066). These enhanced fit statistics indicate that the inclusion of academic achievement and the additional pathways have resulted in a model that better represents the observed data.

With regard to the prior model, this revised version presents residual variances for all endogenous variables as they appear in R1, R2, R3, and R4 offering insight into unexplained variance within each construct. This addition quantifies the amount of variance in each construct that is not predicted by these paths specified within our model. This extended model, overall remains similar in the foundation of relationships between psychophysical distress constructs but provides a richer comprehension as to how these may interact and shape academic outcomes. The results indicate that psychophysical distress might relate to academic achievement in a nonlinear way, suggesting

the necessity for interventions targeting students on multiple levels from multi-angle and provide specific guidance in helping schools better understand their components.

## 5. Discussion

The results of this study provide a comprehensive picture of the interrelationships between anxiety, anger, depression, and stress among Malaysian university athletes. The findings highlight the interconnected nature of these psychophysical constructs and underscore the central role of stress in influencing other negative emotional states.

### 5.1 *Interrelationships Between Psychophysical Constructs*

The strong positive correlations observed between all four psychophysical constructs align with previous research in both athletic and non-athletic populations (Woodman & Hardy, 2003; Lane et al., 2011). The particularly strong correlation between anxiety and stress ( $r = 0.72$ ) supports the well-established link between these two constructs in the sports psychology literature (Martens et al., 1990). This relationship may be especially pronounced in student-athletes due to the dual pressures of academic and athletic performance. The moderate correlations between anger and the other constructs ( $r = 0.49$  to  $0.54$ ) suggest that anger, while related, may operate somewhat independently from anxiety, depression, and stress. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that anger can have both facilitative and debilitative effects on athletic performance, depending on individual differences and situational factors (Robazza & Bortoli, 2007).

### 5.2 *Structural Model of Psychophysical Well-being*

The findings from structural equation models provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between psychophysical distress factors and their potential impact on academic achievement. The strong interrelationships observed between stress, depression, anxiety, and anger align with previous research highlighting the interconnected nature of these psychophysical constructs (Hammen, 2005; Liu & Alloy, 2010). Stress, in particular, emerged as a central factor, showing robust associations with other psychophysical distress indicators. This underscores the importance of stress management interventions in educational settings, as they may have far-reaching effects on students' overall psychophysical well-being. The inclusion of academic achievement in our expanded model revealed intriguing patterns. Contrary to some previous studies that found strong direct links between psychophysical distress and academic performance (Eisenberg et al., 2009), our results suggest a more nuanced relationship. The relatively weak direct effects of depression, anxiety, and anger on academic achievement indicate that the pathways through which psychophysical distress impacts academic outcomes may be more complex than previously thought. This finding aligns with recent research by Keyes et al. (2012), who proposed that the relationship between mental health and academic success is mediated by various factors, including engagement, motivation, and social support.

Particularly the negative relationship between anger and academic achievement, this inverse association suggests that higher levels of anger may be detrimental to academic performance, possibly due to its disruptive effects on cognitive processes and social interactions within the learning environment (Pekrun et al., 2017). However, the small effect size indicates that other factors likely play significant roles in determining academic outcomes. Future research should explore potential mediating variables that might explain the mechanisms through which anger and other psychophysical distress factors influence academic achievement. The excellent fit indices of our models provide strong support for the proposed theoretical framework. However, it is important to acknowledge that structural equation modeling, while powerful, is correlational in nature and cannot establish causality (Kline, 2015). Longitudinal studies and experimental designs are needed to further elucidate the causal relationships between psychophysical distress factors and academic outcomes. Additionally, future research should consider incorporating protective factors and resilience measures to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between psychophysical well-being and academic success in diverse student populations.

The relationship between psychophysical well-being and academic achievement observed in this study has particular relevance for student-athletes. The modest negative impact of anger on academic performance and the complex interplay of stress, anxiety, and depression highlight the unique challenges

faced by athletes balancing academic and sporting commitments. Research by Armstrong and Oomen-Early (2009) found that student-athletes often experience higher levels of stress than their non-athlete peers due to the dual demands of athletic and academic performance. The findings suggest that this increased stress could potentially cascade into other psychophysical distress factors, indirectly affecting academic outcomes.

Interestingly, the weak direct effects of psychophysical distress on academic achievement in our model align with studies specific to student-athletes. For instance, Comeaux and Harrison (2011) found that the relationship between athletic participation and academic success is mediated by factors such as engagement in educationally purposeful activities and interaction with faculty. This parallels our findings suggesting indirect pathways between psychophysical states and academic performance. Moreover, the positive, albeit modest, relationship between anxiety and academic achievement in our model resonates with research by Sagar et al. (2015), who found that moderate levels of anxiety can sometimes enhance performance in both athletic and academic domains for student-athletes. This underscores the complex nature of psychophysical well-being in high-performance environments and suggests that interventions aimed at optimizing rather than eliminating stress and anxiety might be beneficial for student-athletes' overall success.

## 6. Conclusions

The findings of this study underscore the complex and interconnected nature of psychophysical distress factors among student-athletes and their impact on academic achievement. Stress emerges as a central construct, exerting significant influence on anxiety, anger, and depression, while also showing the strongest negative correlation with academic performance. This highlights the critical need for comprehensive stress management interventions in university athletic programs. Such interventions should encompass time management workshops, mindfulness techniques, cognitive-behavioral strategies, and regular mental health check-ins. The intricate relationships between these psychophysical factors emphasize the importance of adopting a holistic approach to athlete well-being, moving beyond addressing issues in isolation to considering the broader psychophysical landscape of student-athletes.

Furthermore, the study's results point to the necessity of increased education and awareness surrounding mental health in collegiate athletics. The relatively weak direct effects of psychophysical distress on academic achievement suggest that the pathways through which these factors influence academic performance may be more complex than previously thought. This complexity calls for a multifaceted approach involving comprehensive psychophysical assessments, integrated treatment strategies, and collaboration between athletic departments, counselling services, and academic support staff. By implementing targeted interventions, fostering a supportive environment, and increasing mental health literacy among coaches, staff, athletes, and their families, universities can better address the unique challenges faced by student-athletes. Ultimately, these efforts aim to optimize both the psychophysical well-being and academic achievement of student-athletes, recognizing the intricate balance between athletic pursuits and academic success in the collegiate environment.

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# A contrastive analysis of Conceptual Metaphor “MEDIA IS A SOLDIER” in Vietnamese and English Electronic news

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## ABSTRACT:

This study explores the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA AS A SOLDIER" in both Vietnamese and English media discourse through the lens of cognitive linguistics. Utilizing Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory, along with descriptive and semantic analysis, statistical methods, and classification techniques, it investigates how the source domain "SOLDIER" maps onto the target domain "MEDIA." The research reveals both similarities and differences in cultural perceptions of this metaphor, highlighting the benefits of teaching English through conceptual metaphors in Vietnamese EFL classrooms. The study analyzes 100 instances from Vietnamese texts and 100 from English texts, identifying cognitive models such as: (1) THE MISSION OF MEDIA IS A SOLDIER'S MISSION; (2) MEDIA AGENCIES AS THE BATTLEFIELD; and (3) MEDIA DEVICES AS WEAPONS. Despite cultural differences, the analysis shows a shared understanding of the metaphor in both languages, underscoring the universal cognitive and linguistic significance of the metaphor while acknowledging cultural nuances. These insights are valuable for teaching, learning, and translating conceptual metaphors, thereby enhancing communication skills for Vietnamese learners of English.

**Keywords:** Conceptual metaphor; Mapping; Media; Soldier; Teaching&learning

## Introduction

Metaphors help us grasp abstract ideas by linking them to more concrete experiences. Their prevalence in everyday language is well-documented; for instance, Geary (2012) notes that we use approximately six metaphors per minute in conversation. Kövecses (2005) highlights that a significant portion of media conceptualization involves metaphors. Despite the extensive exploration of metaphors in various contexts, the specific metaphor "MEDIA AS A SOLDIER" has yet to be fully examined across different languages and cultures. In the cultural history of Vietnam, the image of the soldier has become a powerful symbol, representing the nation's efforts in building and defending the country. These images of soldiers, embodying patriotism, love for the people, and a willingness to sacrifice for peace, independence, and freedom, have deeply resonated in the subconscious and emotions of the Vietnamese people, and have even extended their influence internationally. By analyzing how the metaphor "MEDIA AS A SOLDIER" functions, we can better understand how media narratives are shaped to evoke a sense of duty, conflict, and perseverance. This research employs cognitive linguistics, particularly the theory of conceptual metaphor, to analyze "MEDIA AS A SOLDIER" in Vietnamese and English online newspapers. The study explores the mapping mechanism between the source domain "soldier" and the target domain "media," uncovering the hierarchical structure of metaphorical expressions. By examining the frequency, mapping mechanisms, and cognitive characteristics of these expressions, this investigation offers valuable insights into how media is perceived and portrayed in different linguistic contexts. Moreover, the study suggests that, despite linguistic differences, the core understanding of the "soldier" metaphor remains consistent across Vietnamese and English-speaking communities.

## Conceptual Metaphor

In cognitive semantics, metaphor is viewed as a central concept. Contrary to the traditional perspective of metaphor as merely a literary device for ornamental or novel expression, cognitive linguistics regards metaphor as a fundamental tool of thought that permeates daily life, influencing not only language but also thought and action. Conceptual Metaphor Theory posits that metaphor functions at the cognitive level and

is pervasive in everyday language (Kövecses, 2020; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). The essence of a conceptual metaphor lies in understanding one concept in terms of another through cross-domain mappings, which are the primary mechanism for meaning transfer in metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). These mappings are systematic, partial, and unidirectional projections of basic knowledge elements from a source domain to a target domain, often represented as TARGET DOMAIN IS/AS SOURCE DOMAIN (Phan & Ho, 2023).

This paper aims to analyze the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" in Vietnamese and English, focusing on the mapping from the source domain of A SOLDIER to the target domain of MEDIA. For instance, the expression "Báo chí chiến đấu để bảo vệ những gì là tốt đẹp và chống lại những gì là sai trái, vì vậy tính chiến đấu và tính nhân văn trong hoạt động báo chí phải luôn song hành với nhau" (The press fights to protect what is good and to oppose what is wrong, so the combative nature and humanity in journalism must always go hand in hand) metaphorically describes MEDIA as "a SOLDIER," a concept further explored in this paper. The conceptual transfer mechanism from the domain of "soldier" to the domain of "media" is based on similar attributes: struggle, competition, and strong efforts to win. On the battlefield, soldiers fight to protect the country and its people from enemy attacks. Similarly, in the media domain, journalists and media outlets "fight" to protect justice, fairness, and accurate information, while combating hostility and misinformation.

## Media

Media, as described by Dinh Kieu Chau (2016) in *Communication and Marketing Language: Perspectives from Theory to Vietnamese Practice*, involves the process of conveying, receiving, and exchanging information between individuals, significantly impacting various aspects of society, including politics, religion, education, and commerce. Furthermore, the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines media as the primary means through which large populations access information and entertainment, encompassing channels such as television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet.

## Soldier

The Oxford Advanced Dictionary defines a 'soldier' as a member of an army, particularly one who is not an officer. Similarly, the Cambridge Dictionary describes a 'soldier' as a person who is in an army and wears its uniform, especially someone who fights in wars. The category of "soldier" can be observed in smaller metaphorical groups and suggests common attributes typical of the source domain. To explain the attributes of the concept of the source domain as a soldier, the author divided the term "soldier" into three main groups: (1) Soldier as an agent of action: assault, enter the fray, declare war, fight, struggle, protect, repel; (2) Soldier as a participant in a context: front, battlefield, battle, frontline, war, battleground; and (3) Soldier as associated with tools: gun, steel shield, bomb, weapon.

## Research Questions

The article examines the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" as represented in Vietnamese and English online newspapers. It focuses on identifying and analyzing the different metaphorical models that emerge from the mapping of the source domain "soldier" onto the target domain "media." This analysis aims to uncover the underlying cognitive structures that shape how media is portrayed in both linguistic contexts, offering insights into the cross-cultural similarities and differences in metaphorical conceptualization.

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the following research questions guide the investigation:

1. How is the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" conceptualized in Vietnamese and English online newspapers?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" between Vietnamese and English in terms of metaphorical expressions, frequency, and cultural significance?
3. What are the implications of these findings for teaching and learning about the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" in both Vietnamese and English-speaking contexts?

## Methods

The research paper investigates the metaphor "Media is a Soldier" by examining its use in both Vietnamese and English online newspapers. A total of 200 samples were collected from Vietnamese sources, including *Dan Tri*, *Nhan Dan*, *Thanh Nien*, *Tuoi Tre*, and *Tien Phong*, as well as international outlets such as *The New York Times*, *CNN*, *The Guardian*, *Forbes*, *NBC News*, and *The Washington Post*. Utilizing cognitive linguistics as the theoretical framework, the study employed descriptive and semantic analyses, alongside statistical and classification methods, to explore the metaphor's nuances. Statistical techniques were used to analyze quantitative data and uncover the metaphor's mapping mechanism and perceptual semantics, while classification methods organized metaphorical expressions according to the "soldier" conceptual category. This allowed for the reconstruction of the metaphor system in alignment with the research objectives. To reduce subjectivity in metaphor identification, the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), as proposed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007), was applied. This procedure included four steps: (i) thoroughly understanding the semantics through a review of media discourse; (ii) identifying words or phrases that seemed contextually unusual; (iii) checking these elements against dictionaries to assess their contextual coherence; and (iv) labeling them as metaphors if they did not semantically align with other terms. Words or phrases that created initial semantic conflicts were categorized as "metaphorically-expressed words," and the corresponding texts were classified as "metaphor expressions."

## Results/Findings and discussion

The survey reveals that the metaphor "MEDIA AS A SOLDIER" is prevalent in both Vietnamese and English online newspapers. According to the principle of partial mapping, attributes from the source domain "a soldier" are projected onto the target domain "Media," resulting in the target domain exhibiting certain characteristics of the source domain. Analysis of 200 samples from both Vietnamese and English online newspapers illustrates the conceptual model of "MEDIA AS A SOLDIER" through the mapping structure presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Mapping structure of Conceptual metaphor MEDIA IS A SOLDIER**

SOURCE: A SOLDIER	Mapped onto	TARGET: MEDIA
Soldiers	————→	Journalists, media personnel
Generals and military leaders	————→	Editors, media strategists
Protecting and serving their country	————→	protecting and serving the public by providing information
Victory through military success	————→	Victory through public opinion
Military strategy	————→	Media strategy
Fight against enemies and threats	————→	Fight against misinformation, corruption, and injustice
Weapons and ammunition	————→	Information, news articles, media content
Battlefield, geographical area of conflict	————→	Information landscape, digital platforms, public discourse
Influence on the enemy	————→	Influence on users/audience

Based on the collected data, we have compiled and categorized the conceptual metaphors, which are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Metaphorical Expression Statistics of Conceptual Metaphor MEDIA IS A SOLDIER**

The similarities between the source and target domains	Metaphorically-expressed words	Vietnamese	English	Total number of metaphorical expressions
		Occurrences	Occurrences	
dedication, strategic action, expertise, and a sense of duty	Xông pha (Charge)	2	0	200
	Xung kích (Assault)	3	0	
	Xung trận Engage in battle	2	0	
	Tuyên chiến (Declare war)	3	0	
	Chiến đấu (Fight)	3	5	
	Đấu tranh (Struggle)	6	2	
	Bảo vệ (Protect)	2	0	
	Bủa vây (Surround)	6	6	
Conflict, Strategy, Combat, Victory/Defeat	Mặt trận (Front)	15	28	
	Trận địa (Battleground)	20	0	
	Trận chiến (Fight)	4	0	
	Trận tuyến (Battle line)	3	0	
	Cuộc chiến (Battle)	7	42	
	Chiến trường (battlefield)	1	9	
effectiveness, power and impact	Gun (gun)	1	0	
	Đạn (bullet)	3	0	
	Lá chắn thép (steel shield)	3	0	
	Bom (bomb)	9	0	
	Vũ khí (weapon)	7	8	
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

Based on the mapping structure of the conceptual metaphor 'MEDIA IS A SOLDIER' shown in Table 1, this paper develops cognitive metaphor models of the media, using 'a soldier' as the source domain, as outlined below.

**Table 3: The cognitive metaphor models of Media as a soldier**

Cognitive metaphor models	Vietnamese		English	
	Occurrences	(%)	Occurrences	(%)
The mission of Media is a Soldier's mission	27/100	27	13/100	13
Media agencies as the battlefield	50/100	57	79/100	79
Media devices as Weapons	23/100	16	8/100	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The conceptual metaphor *MEDIA IS A SOLDIER* involves mapping from the source domain of *SOLDIER* to the target domain of *MEDIA*. This paper analyzed 200 metaphorical expressions and identified three cognitive models: (1) The mission of the media is akin to a soldier's mission; (2) media agencies are

perceived as a battlefield (3) media devices are considered weapons. In Vietnamese, the most prominent model is "Media agencies as a battlefield " (57%), followed by "The mission of media is a soldier's mission" (27%), and "Media devices as weapons" (23%). In English, the leading model is also "Media agencies as a battlefield " (79%), with "The mission of media is a soldier's mission" (13%), and "Media devices as weapons" (8%) as the least common.

### The Conceptual metaphor “The mission of Media is a Soldier’s mission”

- (1) Báo chí **xông pha** muôn mặt đời thường từ nông thôn, đến thành thị, từ chuyện có tác động lớn, nhưc nhối xã hội đến những góc khuất đời thường, chỉ rõ nạn “cường hào mới” ở nông thôn đang lộng hành (*The media charges into various aspects of everyday life from rural to urban areas, from issues with significant social impact to the hidden corners of daily life, clearly pointing out the rampant 'new oppressors' in rural areas*)

The literal interpretation of "xông pha" (to charge into) conveys a sense of bravery and facing challenges head-on. Just as soldiers are known for their bravery and readiness to confront dangers, the metaphor implies that the media similarly tackles challenges with courage and determination. By likening the media's role in uncovering and reporting issues to soldiers charging into battle, the metaphor emphasizes the media's proactive, brave, and assertive approach to exposing injustices and reporting on significant matters.

- (2) Báo chí **xung kích** trên tuyến đầu chống dịch (*The media assaults on the frontline against the pandemic*)

"Xung kích" (assault) refers to active, frontline military engagement. When applied to the media during the pandemic, this metaphor transfers a soldier's proactive and courageous attributes to the media's role. It frames the media as taking initiative, actively addressing challenges, and bravely confronting risks, similar to soldiers in combat. This metaphor underscores the media's vital role in defending public health, comparing their efforts to a soldier's essential duty in national defense.

- (3) Báo chí là lực lượng trực tiếp **xung trận** phòng, chống dịch COVID-19 (*The media is the force directly engaging in the battle against COVID-19*)

In example (3), the phrase "xung trận" (entering the battlefield) metaphorically frames the media (specifically, the press) as soldiers in combat. This metaphor transfers the attributes of a soldier's mission to the media's role, highlighting their active, strategic, and confrontational duties. Both soldiers and journalists are depicted as actively engaged in their respective battles. Like soldiers facing threats with courage, journalists demonstrate bravery by reporting in dangerous conditions. While soldiers defend national security, the media protects public well-being, especially during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. This metaphor elevates the media's role to that of a soldier, emphasizing its proactive, protective, and strategic functions.

- (4) Báo chí **chiến đấu** để bảo vệ những gì là tốt đẹp và chống lại những gì là sai trái, vì vậy tính chiến đấu và tính nhân văn trong hoạt động báo chí phải luôn song hành với nhau (*The press fights to protect what is good and to oppose what is wrong, so the combative nature and humanity in journalism must always go hand in hand*)

Literally, “chiến đấu” (fight) refers to engaging in battle, with soldiers fighting to defend their country and values. In journalism, "fight" metaphorically symbolizes the media's role in confronting issues, defending truth, and opposing wrongdoing. Just as soldiers are proactive in their missions, the media is portrayed as equally proactive. Both require bravery, strategic thinking, and dedication. This metaphor emphasizes the significance and impact of the media by likening its role to the noble tasks of soldiers, highlighting the need for assertiveness and integrity in journalism. It effectively conveys the critical nature of the media's mission.

- (5) Truyền thông **đấu tranh** phòng, chống tội phạm xâm hại trẻ em năm 2020 (*Media struggles to prevent and combat child abuse crimes in 2020*)

The metaphor "đấu tranh" in this context highlights the active and confrontational nature of the media's role in combating child abuse, similar to how soldiers actively defend and protect their nation. This conceptual transfer relies on the shared attributes of confrontation, protection, and the use of strategic efforts to achieve a noble goal. By mapping these elements from the source domain (a soldier's mission) to the target domain

(the mission of media), we can see how the metaphor frames the media's role as an active, protective force that combats societal issues with dedication and strategy, much like soldiers on a battlefield.

- (6) Báo chí **bảo vệ** nền tảng tư tưởng của Đảng bằng trình độ, bản lĩnh chính trị của người làm nghề.  
(*The press protects the ideological foundation of the Party with the professionalism and political competence of its practitioners*).

In this example, the metaphor "bảo vệ" implies a mission that involves vigilance, dedication, and a strategic role. By comparing media to soldiers, the metaphor emphasizes the high level of responsibility and the essential nature of media's role in defending and promoting the ideological framework of the party, just as soldiers defend the nation. This metaphor highlights the perceived seriousness and importance of the media's role, suggesting that just as soldiers are fundamental to national security, media professionals are fundamental to maintaining and promoting the ideological integrity of the party.

- (7) Quảng cáo **bủa vây**, chúng tôi biết kiện ai? (*With advertisements all around us, who do we sue?*)  
"Bủa vây" refers to a military tactic where soldiers encircle or besiege a target, creating a sense of being surrounded and overwhelmed. In this context, "bủa vây" describes how pervasive advertisements are, making it feel as though they encircle and overwhelm the viewer. The metaphor effectively conveys the all-encompassing and intrusive nature of advertisements by drawing on the shared attributes between a military siege and media saturation. This comparison helps the audience grasp the extent of the intrusion and the difficulty in escaping it, much like a besieged target in a military scenario.

In the following section, we will examine similar metaphors in English, comparing their use and implications with those in Vietnamese texts. By analyzing these examples, we aim to understand how different linguistic and cultural contexts shape the conceptualization of the media's role, revealing both commonalities and differences across languages.

- (8) Italian media **fight** over the ad market

The metaphor of "fight" transfers the concept from "a soldier's mission" to "the mission of media," leveraging shared attributes between the two domains. This comparison makes the abstract idea of competition in the media industry more tangible by likening it to military conflict. It conveys the intensity and strategic efforts of media companies striving to dominate the market. Just as soldiers pursue strategic objectives, media companies use strategic marketing and promotional tactics similar to military strategies to capture significant market share. By mapping these similarities, the metaphor vividly illustrates the competitive dynamics of the media industry.

- (9) *New York Times* and Twitter **struggle** after Syrian hack

In this example, the metaphor "struggle" maps the concept of a soldier's mission onto media organizations' efforts to address a cybersecurity breach. By framing the media's response as a "struggle," the metaphor highlights the significant effort, conflict, and challenges involved. This mapping conveys the severity of the media's predicament through relatable and vivid imagery, drawing on the dramatic aspects of military missions to underscore the seriousness of the situation. The metaphor uses shared attributes of conflict and effort to create a compelling narrative about the difficulties faced by media organizations, enhancing the audience's understanding of the issue's gravity and impact.

- (10) *While social media **surrounds** us in today's world, only a small portion of the population knows how to strategically use these platforms to reach their personal and professional goals.*

The metaphor "While social media surrounds us in today's world" uses the concept of "surround" from a soldier's mission to highlight the pervasive and influential presence of social media. Just as soldiers surround an area to control and impact it, social media envelops users, influencing their behaviors, thoughts, and interactions. This metaphor underscores the strategic importance of understanding and effectively using social media, akin to a soldier's need to strategically employ their resources. By mapping the attributes of a soldier's mission to media, the metaphor conveys the idea of control and the necessity for strategic action in both contexts.

## The Conceptual Metaphor “Media Agencies as The Battlefield”

- (11) Chủ động thông tin để làm chủ “trận địa” truyền thông (*Proactively managing information to control the 'battlefield' of media*)

In the example, the metaphor "trận địa" (battlefield) depicts the media landscape as a battleground where control and dominance are achieved through proactive management of information. This metaphor highlights the competitive and strategic nature of media operations, emphasizing the need for strategic planning to succeed in the media arena. By mapping battlefield attributes to media agencies, the metaphor creates a vivid image of media as a conflict-ridden space where success depends on strategic control and effective resource use, encouraging a proactive and strategic approach similar to military operations.

- (12) Cuộc đấu tranh về chính trị, tư tưởng thể hiện trên **trận tuyến** báo chí, dù thời chiến hay thời bình luôn gay go, phức tạp; ở giai đoạn hiện nay, tính chất đó còn cao hơn so với trước. (*The struggle for political and ideological issues represented on the media battlefield, whether in wartime or peacetime, is always fierce and complex; at the present stage, this characteristic is even higher than before.*)

The metaphor of "trận tuyến" (battlefield) applied to "báo chí" (media agencies) suggests that the media landscape is akin to a battleground where ideological, political, and intellectual conflicts are fought out. Just as battlefields are arenas of conflict, media agencies are spaces where different ideologies and opinions clash. The media environment, like a battlefield, can be intense and complex, requiring careful navigation and strategy. In summary, the metaphor effectively conveys the notion that media agencies, like battlefields, are crucial sites of contention and strategic maneuvering, characterized by intense conflict and a multiplicity of viewpoints.

- (13) Khi đó, Thủ tướng Singapore Lý Hiển Long cũng đã lần đầu tiên đối thoại với cử tri qua trang Facebook. Kể từ đó, các cuộc bầu cử ở Singapore luôn bắt đầu từ “**chiến trường**” mạng xã hội. (*At that time, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong also engaged with voters for the first time through Facebook. Since then, elections in Singapore have always begun on the 'battlefield' of social media*)

In the given sentence, "chiến trường" metaphorically describes the competitive nature of social media during elections. Literally, "battlefield" refers to a physical space for combat, but in this context, it conveys the intense rivalry and strategic maneuvering in political communication. The metaphor suggests that social media is a crucial arena for political battles, highlighting its strategic importance in elections. It underscores the role of media agencies in shaping election outcomes and influencing public perception, effectively illustrating the competitive and strategic nature of social media in modern politics.

The "battlefield" metaphor, when applied to media agencies, provides insight into how media operations are portrayed in both Vietnamese and English. This metaphor uses imagery of warfare—such as strategy, conflict, and competition—to describe the dynamic and often adversarial nature of media activities. In Vietnamese, it underscores the strategic and combative role of media in shaping national narratives, illustrating the intense environment in which media agencies operate, similar to soldiers on a battlefield. English also uses this metaphor to depict media's competitive and strategic aspects, emphasizing the intense competition and strategic maneuvering involved in media operations and political communication.

- (14) On the media **front**, he has been exploring the idea of launching a new 200,000 weekly newspaper in Jersey

In this example, the term "front" is metaphorically used to describe a key area of activity within the media sector. The term “front” is typically associated with the front lines in a battlefield where major engagements occur. By applying this term to media, it emphasizes that the media sector is an area of significant and focused activity, akin to a critical battlefield. Using "front" suggests that the media sector is a crucial area where strategic actions and decisions are made. It implies that launching a new newspaper is a significant initiative within this important domain. By framing the media sector as a "front," it emphasizes the strategic importance of media initiatives and the concentrated efforts needed to make an impact, reflecting the dynamic and pivotal nature of media activities similar to key battlefield engagements.



(15) U.S. Presidential Race and the Social Media **Battle**

In this example, the term “battle” metaphorically describes the intense and competitive nature of social media activities during the presidential race. Literally, “battle” refers to armed conflict between opposing forces. Applied to social media, it conveys that engagement and competition are fierce and strategic, akin to a battle. This metaphor highlights that social media outcomes can significantly impact the election, much like the results of a battle affect broader objectives. By framing social media engagement as a “battle,” the metaphor effectively communicates the competitive and strategic aspects of political campaigning in the digital age, emphasizing that social media is a battlefield where substantial efforts are made to secure victory and shape public opinion.

(16) In truth, Fox News has been defeated on the media **battlefield**

The metaphor of “battlefield” in the example draws a conceptual transfer from the domain of war to the domain of media competition. This metaphor relies on shared attributes between the two domains to create a meaningful comparison. The conceptual transfer from “battlefield” to “media agencies” occurs because both domains involve competition, strategy, and the pursuit of dominance. By conceptualizing the media environment as a “battlefield,” the metaphor highlights the strategic efforts required by media organizations to succeed and the conflicts they engage in with competitors. It emphasizes the adversarial nature of the media landscape, where different viewpoints constantly compete for audience attention and influence.

### The Conceptual Metaphor “Media Devices as Weapons”

(17) Mỗi bài viết tuyên truyền, đấu tranh phản bác như những **viên đạn** bắn vào kẻ thù, vào các thế lực thù địch (*Each propagandistic and counter-argumentative article is like a bullet fired at the enemy, at hostile forces*)

Literally, “viên đạn” translates to “bullet,” a projectile used in firearms. Metaphorically, it equates media articles with bullets, viewing media content as strategic tools in a conflict. Just as bullets are aimed at specific targets in warfare, media articles target and influence particular audiences, shaping opinions or countering opposing views. Both bullets and media articles require a delivery mechanism to reach their targets. This comparison underscores the deliberate and strategic nature of media, portraying articles as instruments in a battle of ideas meant to challenge and counteract opposing narratives. By likening media articles to bullets, the metaphor emphasizes their power and precision in influencing public opinion and combating misinformation.

(18) Thông điệp 5K- **“lá chắn thép”** bảo vệ cộng đồng (*5K message - ‘steel shield’ protecting the community*)

Literally, the term “lá chắn thép” translates to “steel shield,” which refers to a sturdy, protective barrier used in battle to defend against attacks. The metaphor “lá chắn thép” in the context of the 5K message emphasizes the protective and defensive qualities of the health guidelines. Just as a steel shield serves as a reliable means of defense, the 5K message is portrayed as a strong and effective tool for safeguarding the community from disease. This metaphor conveys the significance and effectiveness of the health guidelines by leveraging the powerful and familiar imagery of a steel shield.

(19) Rạng sáng nay 28/11, khi mà cả thế giới đang hướng về World Cup thì tờ The Times đã tung ra một quả **bom truyền thông** liên quan tới Messi. (*Early this morning on 28/11, while the whole world was focused on the World Cup, The Times dropped a media bomb related to Messi.*)

The metaphor “quả bom” in the context of the news about Messi illustrates the sudden, impactful, and widespread nature of the information released by The Times. Just as a bomb creates a significant and immediate impact, the metaphor emphasizes that the news about Messi captured the world's attention abruptly and forcefully. The comparison to a bomb conveys the idea that the news was surprising and disruptive, causing a ripple effect in the media landscape and among the public. This metaphor effectively communicates the magnitude and shock value of the news by drawing on the powerful imagery of a bomb.

(20) Mạng xã hội - một loại **“vũ khí”** giống như **súng** cần phải kiểm soát (*Social media - a type of ‘weapon’ like a gun that needs to be controlled*)

The metaphor “súng” in the context of social media highlights the powerful and potentially dangerous nature of social media platforms. Just as a gun has the capacity to exert control and cause harm, social

media can influence public opinion, spread misinformation, and incite negative behaviors. This metaphor effectively communicates the dual nature of social media as both a powerful tool and a potential threat, drawing on the familiar and impactful imagery of a gun.

The following English example continues to explore the conceptual metaphor "Media Devices as Weapons," illustrating how similar ideas are expressed across different linguistic and cultural contexts. This comparison offers a broader perspective on the metaphor's usage, revealing how both languages conceptualize the power and influence of media in distinct yet comparable ways.

(21) How the media became one of Putin's most powerful **weapons**

In this metaphor, the concept of "weapons" is mapped onto the concept of "media devices." The metaphorical expression suggests that media devices, under Putin's control, function similarly to weapons in terms of power and influence. The transfer relies on the shared attributes of effectiveness, power, and impact. The conceptual transfer leverages shared attributes of power, precision, and strategic use, creating a vivid and impactful metaphor that highlights the significant role of media in modern political dynamics.

### **Similarities and Differences of the Conceptual metaphor of "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" in Vietnamese and English**

The research identifies notable similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" between Vietnamese and English. Both languages employ similar metaphorical mappings, using corresponding expressions such as "chiến đấu/fight," "đấu tranh/struggle," and "bủa vây/surround" to describe the media's mission, and "mặt trận/front," "cuộc chiến/battle," and "chiến trường/battlefield" to represent media agencies. Media devices are often described using weapon-related terminology. Survey data reveals an equal frequency of "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" metaphorical expressions, with 100 instances each in Vietnamese and English, suggesting a shared understanding of this metaphor. This metaphor can be broken down into three subcognitive metaphors: Media's mission as a soldier's mission, media agencies as the battlefield, and media devices as weapons. "Media agencies as the battlefield" is the most prevalent metaphor in both languages, followed by the other two, highlighting a common cognitive structure. Both Vietnamese and English use similar metaphorical expressions linked to "SOLDIER" to describe various aspects of media, emphasizing attributes like dedication, strategic action, expertise, a sense of duty, effectiveness, power, and impact. While the "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" metaphor appears equally in both languages, the specific expressions and their frequency show some variation. For instance, "trận địa" appears 20 times in Vietnamese but not at all in English, while "cuộc chiến" appears 7 times in Vietnamese and 42 times in English. Despite these quantitative differences, both languages effectively use the metaphor to convey the concept of media, making it a powerful linguistic tool.

Based on the statistical data and analysis, the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" involves a set of mappings from the source domain "A SOLDIER" to the target domain "MEDIA." The metaphorical expressions are similar in both languages, with subordinate metaphors sharing a common mapping mechanism where attributes from the source domain are applied to the target domain in both Vietnamese and English. However, Vietnamese tends to be more expressive, using a wider range of metaphorical expressions to describe a soldier, such as "xông pha," "xung kích," "xung trận," "trận chiến," "trận địa," "trận tuyến," and "cuộc chiến." This difference in the variety and nuance of metaphorical expressions reflects the distinct cultural traits of each nation.

### **Implications for foreign language teaching and learning**

A profound understanding of the similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" can greatly aid in teaching and explaining metaphors to students. Teachers can introduce students to a new interpretation of metaphors, emphasizing that they are not merely literary devices but crucial processes of thought. The formation of metaphors is based on underlying associations with everyday activities. Teachers can make their lessons more engaging by requiring students to collect examples of the metaphorical concept "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER" in both English and Vietnamese. This exercise will likely

make learning more rewarding and intriguing for students as they encounter new information about conceptual metaphors. Furthermore, teachers can introduce students to various conceptual metaphors related to MEDIA, such as "MEDIA IS A PERSON," "MEDIA ARE PLANTS," "MEDIA IS FIRE," and "MEDIA IS WATER, etc." The more students are exposed to different mappings, the more interested they will be in the lessons. Students will come to realize that conceptual metaphors are commonplace in everyday life and that they can link their experiences to numerous concepts. Finally, explaining conceptual metaphors may help students grasp the concept of systematicity in human thought. Although this may sound academic, the goal is for students to discover the logic in human thinking by exploring why people connect their experiences with certain images rather than others and why English speakers may have different metaphorical images than Vietnamese speakers.

## Conclusion

This study offers strong evidence that language fundamentally shapes and expresses our thoughts. By thoroughly examining the metaphor "MEDIA IS A SOLDIER," the research demonstrates the presence of this metaphor in both Vietnamese and English. The analysis identifies three distinct metaphorical models: (1) the media's mission parallels that of a soldier; (2) media agencies are conceptualized as battlegrounds; and (3) media devices are viewed as weapons. These models illuminate how soldier-related terminology permeates media discourse, underscoring the cognitive processes shared by both Vietnamese and English speakers. This frequent use of militaristic language points to a deeply ingrained cultural and cognitive perception of the media as an active, combative force in society. These findings contribute significantly to our understanding of the cognitive foundations underlying media concepts in both English and Vietnamese, aligning with theories by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) on the pervasive nature of conceptual metaphors in structuring our thoughts. However, this study is limited to the metaphor of "soldier" as a source domain, which primarily encompasses attributes like protection, struggle, and combat. Other conceptual metaphors such as "MEDIA IS A TRAP" (suggesting manipulation or deceit), "MEDIA IS A CRIMINAL" (implying unethical behavior), and "MEDIA IS A PLANT" (indicating growth and nurturing) are prevalent in both languages and warrant further exploration. Expanding research to include these metaphors will deepen our understanding of the diverse ways in which media is conceptualized, adding nuance to our knowledge of cross-cultural cognitive processes and metaphor use. Furthermore, future research could investigate the impact of cultural differences among various ethnic groups in shaping media metaphors. The influence of culture on metaphorical thought has been widely discussed in cognitive linguistics, notably by Kövecses (2005), who argues that metaphors are shaped not only by universal cognitive patterns but also by culture-specific experiences. Understanding these nuances will enhance both theoretical insights and practical applications, especially in cross-cultural communication. Finally, this study has practical implications for language teaching and translation. The insights gained from comparing Vietnamese and English media metaphors can inform teaching methods in Vietnamese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms, as conceptual metaphors can aid students in grasping complex abstract concepts more intuitively. This study can thus serve as a valuable reference for research and education, particularly in university language departments focused on cognitive linguistics and media studies.

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# Using the National Geographic Website in CLIL Teaching to Improve ESP Learners' Motivation and Learning Outcomes

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## ABSTRACT

In recent years, CLIL has been increasingly implemented in EFL teaching, particularly in ESP classrooms. With the prevalence of applied technology in English instruction, there are many accessible websites, and the National Geographic site is one of the finest and most appropriate for CLIL-based teaching. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of the CLIL approach through the use of the NG website on improving motivation and learning outcomes among ESP Vietnamese learners. Data was collected from students of a Business class and a Tourism class at the ESP Department, University of Foreign Language Studies, The University of Danang (UFLS\_UD), through a semi-structured interview. The findings reveal that the CLIL approach with the use of NG websites positively influences students' motivation and learning outcomes in the translation classroom during the intervention. It also provides insights into the various aspects of the CLIL approach that contribute to the enhancement of motivation and learning outcomes, which could benefit both teachers and students in terms of teaching and learning translation skills in an ESP context. Besides, the implications of this research are to suggest a long-term strategy for innovating English teaching and learning, which is a core goal of the Vietnam National Foreign Language Project 2030.

**Keywords:** ESP, CLIL, National Geographic, motivation, learning outcomes.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, along with the fundamental and comprehensive reform of education in Vietnam, many reform programs have been carried out. The National Foreign Language Project 2030 that we are implementing is also in that trend. With the aim of improving the quality of English teaching and integrating into the international education, the project specifically focuses on innovation in teaching methods. In addition, as Dovey [9] said “ESP teaching attributes transferable from university to workplace, including “the ability to communicate effectively with colleagues and managers.” Therefore, to adapt to the global economic changes, and meet the higher demand from businesses and employers, ESP students should be equipped with not only linguistic proficiency, but also effective communication skills, with a particular emphasis on their motivation and willingness to acquire knowledge.

However, through the researchers' teaching practice and research, it has been observed that the conventional teaching method, known as the Communicative Approach, does not effectively motivate learners to acquire and improve their language competence, and that CLIL (Content and Language Integrating Learning) approach has been proved to offer distinct benefits in this regard. In his study, Coyle [8] showed that CLIL could “raise learner linguistic competence and confidence”. This teaching method is also supported by Bicknell [3], who posed the question that why we should teach business English with traditional methods while CLIL can do it much more effectively. This method has also received the attention of some researchers in the country. In Vietnam context, Nguyen [21] has studied the necessary requirements of applying CLIL in teaching of International Studies subjects through English.

Besides, the use of applied technology in English education has become more widespread. As a result, several websites have emerged, offering accessible resources for instructional purposes. Among them, the National Geographic website stands out as an exemplary and highly suitable platform for Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) pedagogy.

This study aims to investigate the effects of incorporating the National Geographic website into CLIL instruction, with the goal of enhancing the motivation and learning outcomes of ESP learners. The study

seeks to contribute to the advancement of high-quality language education for students in an ESP setting at UFL, Danang University, within the context of the Information Technology (IT) era. Specifically, the study will address the following question:

1. What are students' attitudes toward National Geographic website in improving their motivation and learning outcomes?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

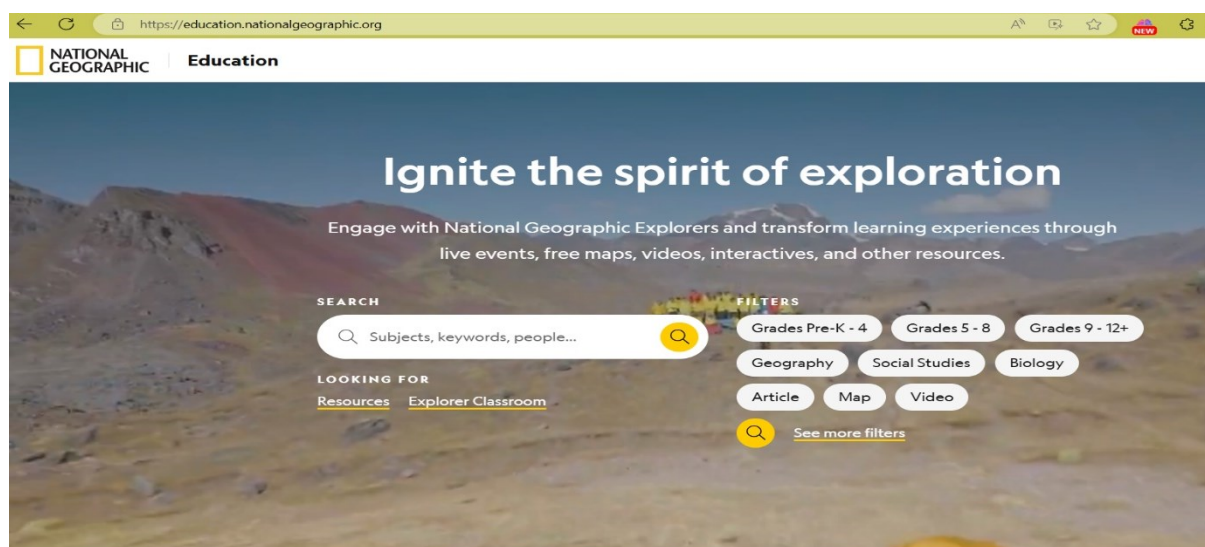
### 2.1. ESP students – Business English (BE)

According to Dudley Evans and St. John [10], one of the characteristics of ESP is that ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners, generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. It may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English. Carter [5] identifies three types of ESP: English as a restricted language; English for Academic and Occupational Purposes; English with specific topics. In this case, English for Business and English for Tourism (or Business English and Tourism English) belong to the second type.

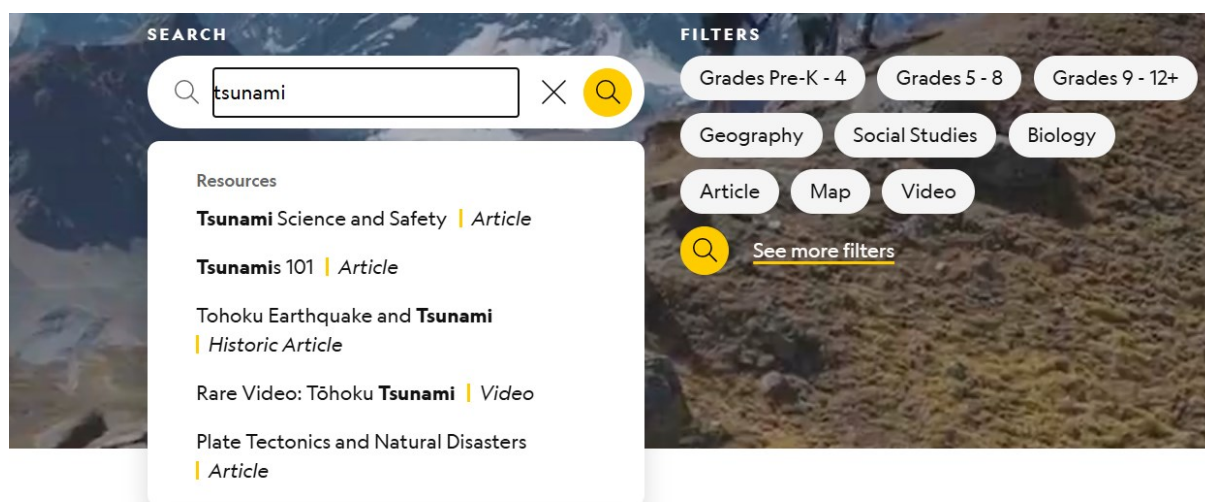
### 2.2 National Geographic website and its role in ESP teaching

Specifically, it is Education National Geographic website ([education.nationalgeographic.org](https://education.nationalgeographic.org)) that adopt CLIL-based content for language learning, blending linguistic features with rich subject matter. Through the website which not only introduces learners to real-world language use but also diverse global topics, ESP learners are immersed in a world of exploration and knowledge. According to Bicknell [3], CLIL approach can blend content and language learning to make it a powerful tool in mastering specific terms and concepts. By employing National Geographic content, it can be ensured that learning is relevant as well as intrinsically motivating for students, as they explore topics which are globally significant (Nguyen [22]).

*Picture 1. User-friendly interface of National Geographic website*



*Picture 2. Pop-up hints when typing the keywords.*



### 2.3. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

There has been a wide variety of definitions for CLIL. David Marsh, who is considered a leading expert in CLIL, defined CLIL as “a generic term that refers to the teaching of subjects in a different language from the mainstream language of instruction” (Marsh,[19]). According to Marsh [19], the term CLIL was first coined in 1996 “to denote a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (p.234). In another study, CLIL was defined as “an innovative model for languages education”, in which “mainstream curriculum content is delivered through the students’ non-native language” (Cross & Gearon, [7], p.6). In CLIL, a foreign target language (TL) is acquired to “pre-defined levels through using the language meaningfully as a medium of teaching and learning various contents across the curriculum together with the actual language of schooling.” (Wewer, [25], p.278). In addition, Cross [6] pointed out that the most striking difference between CLIL and similar content-related pedagogies is that CLIL focuses on developing both new content and language, rather than “on content while teaching through the medium of another language”, or “using content to simply frame language around particular themes or topics that might only be incidental to the teaching of language” (p.25).

The survey report published in 2001 laid the foundation for the description of CLIL types. Bentley [1] classified CLIL into three types in the curriculum, which are:

-Soft CLIL: It is practised as part of a language course, in which some content topics are taught during a language period.

-Hard CLIL: It is practised as a partial immersion program, almost half of the curriculum is taught in the target language, and the subject would reflect what is taught in the target language.

-Modular CLIL: In this type, a subject is taught for a certain number of hours in the target language, and subject teachers select topics from the subject syllabus which they teach in the target language.

According to Cross and Gearon ([7], CLIL, as an “additive bilingual approach”, offers considerable benefits, which are : an academic achievement that typically matches or surpass monolingual approaches ; positive gains in first language literacy development; and heightened levels of intercultural awareness and competence” (p.6). In another research, Koro [16] listed four main benefits of CLIL models, which include linguistic competence, motivation, cognitive competence and challenge, and intercultural competence. Gimeno, ÓDónaill and Zygmantait [11] also shared the same view when stated that CLIL offers students some great benefits such as : promoting content knowledge and language competence, developing intercultural understanding, and enhancing students’ motivation and confidence.

Although there has been much attention paid to the effectiveness of CLIL in language teaching, which had mentioned above, to the best of my knowledge, there are relatively few studies have examined teachers and students’ perception of CLIL in ESP classroom in Vietnam .



### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research design and research setting

This study employs qualitative methods together with an experimental design that involves the implementation of an intervention. The intervention was conducted between September 2023 and October 2023 by the primary researcher, who also served as a teacher, to discover the impacts of the CLIL-based modules on students' learning. The study will be conducted within a 15-week course in ESP curriculum, which is named “Translation 1”, or also known as General Translation. The course includes five main topics, each lasting 100 minutes per week and delivered over fifteen consecutive weeks, however, this study only focus on seven weeks. The participants for the intervention were 34 third-year undergraduate students in a business class at ESPD, UFLS-UD, so they are mostly at the upper-intermediate level of linguistic skills. Fifteen of these fifty students volunteered to take part in the interview conducted in the last week of the intervention.

#### 3.2 Research Instrument

In this study, besides the survey, which is provided to students at the end of seven weeks, semi-structure interviews were chosen to explore the students’ reflections on the effect of National Geographic website in their learning. The interview was conducted in Vietnamese to ensure the authenticity and fluency of their responses.

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After seven weeks of implementing the CLIL method in translation training using content from the National Geographic website, the study conducted five interviews, every two weeks, following class sessions. Each interview involved a group of five to six students, lasting flexibly between thirty to forty minutes. The purpose was to gather specific student feedback on the application of the CLIL method in translation training using content from the National Geographic website and to assess its effectiveness in improving students' translation skills.

*Figure 1. Students’ attitudes toward the National Geographic website*

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	34	2	5	3.82	.758
Q2	34	2	5	3.82	.834
Q3	34	2	5	3.94	.851
Q4	34	2	5	3.68	.878
Q5	34	3	5	4.00	.696
Q6	34	2	5	4.03	.758
Q7	34	2	5	3.82	.797
Q8	34	3	5	4.18	.716

#### 4.1. Satisfaction with the User-Friendliness of National Geographic Website

The average satisfaction rating for the user-friendliness of the National Geographic website is 3.82 out of 5, indicating that most students (67.6%) found the website to be satisfactory to use. However, the standard deviation of 0.758 points to some variability in responses, indicating that while the majority were satisfied, besides, there was only one who found it less user-friendly.

#### 4.2. Content Meeting Expectations

The content on the National Geographic website was rated an average of 3.82 out of 5 for meeting students' expectations. This suggests that students generally found the content comprehensive and suitable for their learning needs. It also indicates consistency in the students' satisfaction with the content.



“Yes, because this website has a wide variety of interesting and diverse articles. For example, if I need to translate about commerce, there are many articles on the site that I can use as translation sources.”(student05)

“Yes, the content aligns with specific learning and translation needs because it provides comprehensive knowledge and useful information resources.”(student14)

“The content is quite suitable for what I want to learn because the sections are clearly divided, the timing and data are complete, and the quality of the content is very good.”(student20)

#### **4.3. Alignment with Study or Translation Needs**

A substantial number of students indicated that the content on the National Geographic website aligns well with their specific study or translation needs, over 4 out of 5. This high percentage underscores the relevance and applicability of the content provided by National Geographic in supporting students’ academic objectives in translation studies.

When being asked if the content of the National Geographic website align with the specific learning or translation needs you are aiming for. 32 out of 34 responses affirmed that the application of CLIL in translation training using content from the National Geographic website was beneficial, inspiring learning and encouraging communication with peers about selecting appropriate translation terms:

“Yes, because it allows me to aim for social connection. The content from NG encourages me to step out of my comfort zone and engage with others (to discuss appropriate translation methods), making the idea of building new friendships more positive.” (Student24)

“Yes, because the content of National Geographic often includes topics such as science, nature, culture, history, and exploration, which are diverse and rich topics that can be interesting to explore and discuss. I can find a range of articles relevant to my translation lessons.”(student28)

#### **4.4. Engagement with Content**

The engagement level with the National Geographic content was rated highly, with an average score of 4.34 out of 5. This indicates that students found the content engaging and it encouraged them to explore further. The relatively low standard deviation (0.69) suggests that most students had a similar positive experience with the website's content.

#### **4.5. Appropriateness as a Source for Studying Translation**

The appropriateness of National Geographic articles as a source for studying translation was confirmed by 88% of the respondents. This high approval rate suggests that the website's articles are seen as valuable resources for translation students, likely due to their depth, relevance, and quality.

In response to the question of whether the application of CLIL in translation training using NG content encouraged further exploration, all 35 respondents affirmed that their experience with translation training using this content made the process interesting, inspiring them to explore more content on the website for effective translation practice. Some specific responses included:

“The article contains very useful information on the topic I am translating. That’s why it makes me want to explore and learn more about other topics in the article.”(student18)

“The content is engaging enough to make me want to delve deeper into the subject.”(student07)

“It’s really interesting and engaging. That’s why when I use the website (for translation training), I want to explore more.”(student09)

“The content from National Geographic is very engaging. It sparks curiosity and a desire to explore further, making me want to learn more by delving into articles, the article library, videos, and interactive features, thereby finding suitable translation methods.”(student30)

“The content from National Geographic is extremely engaging. It invites me to learn more, stimulating curiosity and exploration.”(student32)

“The content on this website is very diverse and closely related to reality, so I find it quite interesting. It encourages me to read and translate more articles.”(student12)

“The content on this website is very engaging, with diverse topics such as nature and culture. The impressive accompanying illustrations encourage the pursuit of excellent translation (and translation) and further exploration.”(student26)

Therefore, making these efforts is worthwhile since getting students involved with a CLIL-based website like National Geographic triggered them not just about the process of doing translation but also about the knowledge matter.

The interview responses partially illustrate the advantages and usefulness of utilizing the website with the approach CLIL to teach ESP students, even though a large-scale survey and evaluation with more trustworthy quantitative data have not been conducted. Students participated in class with the integration of CLIL methodology appear to gain new, practical expertise in addition to linguistic proficiency and translation skills. This scientific project intends to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at the ESP Department with the help of these encouraging outcomes.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The study examined the impacts of CLIL-based website approach on facilitating students' knowledge while studying translation skills. The findings suggest that all of the respondents believe that CLIL is an efficient approach to learn specialized knowledge while gaining language knowledge, and they find the content very engaging and interesting while doing the translation. However, it requires teachers' proper preparation in how to deliver the contents and the activities in class to get the best result and proper Internet connection. It also asks for many concerns from the teaching and administrating staff before applying CLIL in teaching at ESP Department. The implications for English teaching and learning suggested in this study would help teachers enhance teaching quality. Thereby equipping students with certain knowledge is considered a great advantage for students when participating in advanced courses in the future.

This study has a few limitations, such as the fact that it was conducted on one class of ESP students from UFL-UDN. As a result, the reliability and validity of this research are not nearly as strong as they might be. However, the study is the prerequisite to considering whether CLIL should be comprehensibly and synchronously implemented in teaching at the ESP department. It also contributes to proposing a long-term strategy for innovating English teaching and learning, which is considered a key goal of the National Foreign Language Project 2025.

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# Examining Self-Perceived Employability: The Case of College Health Care Students in a Private Higher Education Institution

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the self-perceived employability of healthcare students at a private university in a major city in Southern Philippines. The academic significance of this study, underscored by its unique focus on undergraduate healthcare students in the Philippine setting, makes it a relevant and valuable contribution to the discipline of employability. There are limited published studies on self-perceived employability among undergraduate students. The study used a descriptive correlational research design with more than 909 sampled undergraduate healthcare students participating. Four instruments underwent confidence and construct validation processes using confirmatory factor analysis for each construct. The self-perceived employability of students was examined through the lens of their self-regulated learning, learning skills, life skills, and psychological entitlement. The data was organized using hierarchical regression analysis. The study's results confirmed that self-regulated learning, learning skills, life skills, and psychological entitlement significantly influence self-perceived employability. Of these factors, self-regulated learning and learning skills have the strongest impact, underscoring their critical role in preparing students for the job market. These soft skills play a pivotal role in shaping students' perceptions of their employability and readiness for the workforce.

**Keywords:** Self-Perceived Employability, Self-Regulated Learning, Learning skills, Life Skills, and Psychological Entitlement

## Introduction

In the past decade, global disruptions have impacted various sectors. The World Economic Forum noted that employers are increasingly aware of how geopolitical divides and the COVID-19 pandemic have affected the labor market. This has caused technological changes, shifts in company structures, and the rise of remote and hybrid work (WEF, 2020). These changes have made navigating the job market harder for young people and undergraduates. As the market becomes more unpredictable, students' self-perceived employability has become vital (Kasler et al., 2017). It empowers them to take control of their careers, adapt to job changes, and build resilience. Those with higher self-perceived employability tend to be more confident, engaged and perform better academically (Duggal et al., 2023).

Despite its importance, there is still a lack of research on self-perceived employability, especially among undergraduates. Most studies focus on employees (Álvarez-González et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2015; Wittekind et al., 2010), with fewer examining university students (Álvarez-González et al., 2017). While many recognize the significance of students' career attitudes, studies exploring how students view their employability in a changing market are limited (Chen et al., 2022). Researchers such as Duggal et al. (2023) and Dražić et al. (2018) have identified this research gap, and others like Caballero et al. (2022) and Knezović (2023) have called for further study. Most employability research focuses on specific regions, with few studies from Asia-Pacific (Noori & Azmi, 2021). Assessing self-perceived employability benefits higher education institutions. Universities play a crucial role in preparing students with practical skills, such as 21st-century skills, to help them secure long-term employment and adapt to the evolving job market (Akdere & Conceição, 2009; Drange et al., 2018, cited Niu et al., 2022). Lopez-Miguens et al. (2020) stressed that universities are responsible for enhancing students' employability. Research shows that self-regulation strongly impacts self-perceived employability, with graduates who rate their employability higher feeling more confident entering the workforce. This study focuses on self-perceived employability among undergraduate healthcare students, addressing gaps in local research. It examines self-regulated

learning, life skills, and psychological entitlement to assist policymakers in better-preparing healthcare graduates for successful careers.

## **Theoretical Framework and Related Literature**

This study is based on two fundamental theories: Gary Becker's Human Capital Theory and Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory. Becker's theory (2009) argues that people increase their value in the job market by investing in education, skills, and experience. Self-perceived employability reflects how individuals view their human capital, with those investing more in their education and skills seeing themselves as more employable (Holden & Biddle, 2017). On the other hand, Vygotsky's Social Development Theory (1978) emphasizes the importance of social interactions in learning. He proposed that learning occurs in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)—the gap between what someone can do alone and what they can achieve with help from others. Vygotsky suggests that self-perceived employability is shaped by interactions with peers, mentors, and the surrounding social environment, influencing how students view their employability based on their experiences.

*Self-perceived employability* is the ability to secure and maintain a job that matches one's qualifications, an essential factor in graduates' career development (Rothwell, 2008). It includes students' job-related knowledge and skills. Rothwell et al. (2008, 2009) identified four aspects of perceived employability: self-beliefs, labor market conditions, field of study, and university reputation. High self-perceived employability improves job prospects, increases career confidence, and helps students feel more prepared for the labor market (Pitan & Muller, 2020; Aydin, 2022). Studies claim that self-perceived employability is influenced by critical factors such as self-regulated learning, 21st-century skills (learning and life skills), and psychological entitlement.

*Self-Regulated Learning and Self-Perceived Employability.* Zimmerman's (2000) model defines self-regulated learning as how individuals manage their learning through goal setting, planning, strategies, and self-assessment. It has three phases: forethought (planning and setting goals), performance (executing tasks), and self-reflection (evaluating results). These phases help learners control their academic behavior, which is essential for achieving goals. Developing self-regulation skills is vital to effective learning and improving employability. Research shows that self-regulated learning at the university level boosts students' job prospects by helping them reach their learning goals (Panadero, 2017; Aisyawati et al., 2024). Campuses and lecturers can support this by offering training, feedback, and academic support. Career maturity and self-regulated learning are pivotal for preparing students for the workforce (Zufa, 2022), and personal goal setting and career planning are linked to higher self-perceived employability (Putri, 2019). This study suggests that self-regulated learning affects students' self-perceived employability.

*The 21st-century skills: Learning and Life Skills.* This study discusses 21st-century skills within the context of learning and life skills, which are now essential in the job market. Rapid technological changes and globalization have transformed higher education and the graduate job market (Ayala Calvo, 2021). Skills are essential at national, regional, and international levels (Suarta et al., 2017). As demand for highly skilled and socially responsible workers increases, higher education plays a crucial role in preparing students (Rubio-Andrés et al., 2023). Universities should focus on innovative teaching methods to develop these skills, as curricula often struggle to meet evolving job market demands (Jackson, 2013; Argos & Ezquerro, 2014; Jiracheewong et al., 2019).

*Learning Skills and Self-Perceived Employability.* Botha (2021) emphasized the importance of young people understanding the skills and experiences needed for the job market. Soft skills like critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, digital literacy, flexibility, initiative, and leadership are crucial for enhancing students' self-perceived employability. Universities focusing on developing these skills, particularly in healthcare, produce more competitive graduates. Research has explored the connection between employability and learning skills from the perspectives of university recruiters (Moy, 2006), faculty (Aistrich et al., 2006), and employers (Finch et al., 2013). Critical thinking, vital for healthcare professionals, supports evidence-based decision-making and adaptability. Students confident in their critical thinking skills tend to feel more prepared for the job market. Miller et al. (2014) found that as students improved their problem-solving skills, their confidence in entering healthcare careers increased. Creativity, closely tied to critical thinking, is also crucial for success, especially in adapting to changes in healthcare and providing innovative patient care. Creativity means coming up with new ideas by combining

or reusing old ones (Salwa, 2016). Programs that emphasize creative thinking are more likely to produce employable graduates. In healthcare, creative thinking is important for adapting to new challenges and improving patient care. Programs that teach creativity help produce more employable graduates who can make positive changes. The World Economic Forum found that 73% of organizations value creative thinking when seeking new talent (Wells, 2024). Collaboration is another crucial skill. As healthcare increasingly relies on multidisciplinary teams, strong collaboration improves patient care. Students skilled in collaboration tend to feel more confident about their employability. McBride (2018) found that solid teamwork helps healthcare students succeed in clinical settings. Communication is essential for collaboration and one of healthcare's most important employability skills. Effective communication builds strong relationships within healthcare organizations and boosts work readiness (O'Brien et al., 2020). Finally, digital literacy is becoming increasingly important for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. In healthcare, digital skills lead to greater efficiency and improved patient outcomes.

*Life Skills and Self-Perceived Employability.* This study highlights that flexibility, initiative, and leadership are key skills that boost healthcare students' confidence in their employability. Flexibility helps professionals adapt to changes, ensuring consistent care, and education focused on these skills increases students' job readiness and career prospects. O'Brien (2020) found that flexibility also improves collaboration and adapting to client needs. Initiative in healthcare means taking action to improve care without being prompted, which is vital in fast-paced environments where delays can harm patients (Conway et al., 2019). Students who show initiative gain independence and problem-solving skills. Leadership is another vital skill, involving guiding and inspiring teams to achieve high-quality patient care. Students with leadership skills use problem-solving and interpersonal abilities to motivate others and act with integrity. Studies by Hoedemakers (2023) and Borbon (2021) show that leadership positively impacts employability, especially in fields like dentistry and nutrition (Ferguson, 2024).

*Psychological Entitlement and Self-Perceived Employability.* Psychological entitlement refers to a general feeling of deservingness across different situations, not based on one's effort or performance (Campbell et al., 2004). Although often seen negatively, Huang (2017) cited a study where students who felt temporarily entitled showed more creativity, such as creating unique uses for a paperclip or drawing imaginative aliens. Gonzales (2023) noted that while psychology has long studied entitlement, it is gaining attention in work and academic settings. Her research found entitlement to be the strongest predictor of self-perceived employability in minority female young adults, linking it to increased self-awareness and job-seeking skills. However, entitlement can also cause people to overestimate their abilities and shift responsibility onto others, making them less determined in their job search (McLellan & Jackson, 2017; Dražić et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2020). Future research should explore the role of entitlement in academic and employment behaviors.

Various studies on self-regulated learning, 21st-century skills (learning and life skills), and psychological entitlement in preparing healthcare students for gainful entry into the labor market have been robustly discussed, establishing the assumption that these variables significantly affect self-perceived employability. Given these assumptions, this study aimed to establish predictors of self-perceived employability with the following hypotheses:

- H1: Students' self-regulated learning affects self-perceived employability.
- H2: 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills influence self-perceived employability.
- H3: Psychological entitlement influences self-perceived employability.

## Methodology

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design. It was conducted at a private non-sectarian university in a major city in Southern Philippines, with 909 undergraduate healthcare third-year and fourth-year students participating—stratified sampling from the Colleges of Pharmacy, Rehabilitation Sciences, Radiologic Technology, Nursing, and Medical Laboratory Science. Data was collected using a 4-point Likert Scale survey to assess Students' Self-Perceived Employability and related constructs. This adapted instrument was based on the primary constructs outlined by various researchers. The survey comprised four sections: sixteen items on Self-Regulated Learning, adapted from Zimmerman (2000), Efklides (2011), and Pintrich (2000); and twelve items on Self-Perceived Employability, based on Rothwell, Herbert, & Rothwell (2008), and utilized by Lu (2016). It also had an eighteen-item test measuring learning and life skills for 21<sup>st</sup>-century competencies based on the University Student Outcome Survey (LDCU, 2023) and

a fourteen-item test assessing Psychological Entitlement Gonzales (2023). Confirmatory factor analyses were conducted on all four instruments, strengthening construct validity after modifications. Descriptive statistics and hierarchical multiple regression were used to analyze the data and assess the ability of the independent variables to predict self-perceived employability. Before proceeding, critical assumptions of linearity, independence of errors, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity were evaluated.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1 summarizes the instruments' confidence and construct validity results. The confidence calculation of scores obtained from each scale was performed by applying the internal consistency method, and the values of Cronbach's alpha are within the range of 0.7 to 0.9, denoting that the indicators identified are reliable measures of the construct. To establish construct validity, confirmatory factor analysis was also conducted, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy reached the value of .903 (self-perceived employability); .857 for (psychological entitlement) .910 (self-regulated learning); .927 (learning skills); and .901 (life skills). These figures imply that there was adequate sampling for factor analysis. Furthermore, the factor analysis yielded Bartlett's Test of Sphericity expressed in chi-square significant values less than  $p < .001$ , establishing that the correlation matrices are not identity matrices. Likewise, the factor weights indicate how strongly each observed variable is associated with the underlying factors and are explained by the total variances.

**Table 1.** Summary of the Confidence and Construct Validity Results of the Instruments

Scales	Explained Variance	Cronbach's Alpha	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity
Self-Perceived Employability	65.66%	.892	.903	4822.833***
Psychological Entitlement	56.55%	.793	.857	2016.76***
Self-Regulated Learning	59.28%	.887	.910	4961.885***
Learning Skills	55.55%	.908	.927	5374.593***
Life Skills	57.74%	.847	.901	3042.315***

Note: \*\*\* significant at  $P < .001$

The data indicate that the scales used in this study demonstrated construct validity. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to assess the predictive ability of self-regulated learning (SRL), learning skills (LeS), and life skills (LiS) on self-perceived employability (SPE), while controlling for psychological entitlement (PE). PE was used as the controlling variable, considering the common belief on feeling of entitlement in a specific context but to a general sense of deservingness and entitlement across various situations that do not correspond to one's effort or performance (Campbell et al., 2004). Because of this negative connotation, this study assumed that this may mediate the influence of the other independent variables on self-perceived employability.

Table 2 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression. *Model 1*. In this model, psychological entitlement (PE) explains 9.5% of the variance in self-perceived employability. This was statistically significant:  $F(1, 907) = 95.171$ ,  $p = .000$ .

*Model 2*. Learning skills (LeS) and life skills (LiS), considered 21st-century skills variables, were added to the regression model in the second step. The addition of these variables significantly improved the model,  $\Delta R^2 = .313$ ,  $p = .000$ , with the model now explaining 40.8% of the SPE variance ( $R^2 = .408$ ),  $p = .000$ . Both learning skills ( $\beta = .375$ ,  $p = .000$ ) and life skills ( $\beta = .256$ ,  $p = .000$ ) were significant predictors. This model was also statistically substantial  $F(2, 905) = 207.818$ ,  $p = .000$ . The 21st-century skills variables significantly contribute to predicting self-perceived employability beyond psychological entitlement where its influence has been reduced from ( $\beta = .308$ ,  $p = .000$ ) to ( $\beta = .106$ ,  $p = .000$ ), although still significant.



**Table 2.** Summary Results of the Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Predictor Variables	B	SE B	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	F-change	df	p
1	(Constant)	3.293	.092							
	Psychological Entitlement (PE)	.246	.025	.308	.095	.095	95.171	95.171	1,907	.000
2	(Constant)	1.097	.127							
	Psychological Entitlement (PE)	.084	.022	.106	.408	.313	207.818	239.152	3,905	.000
	Learning Skills (LeS)	.401	.043	.375						
	Life Skills (LiS)	.246	.040	.256						
3	(Constant)	.485	.138							
	Psychological Entitlement (PE)	.062	.021	.077						
	Learning Skills (LeS)	.270	.043	.253	.459	.051	191.862	85.668	4,904	.000
	Life Skills (LiS)	.163	.040	.170						
	Self-Regulated Learning (SRL)	.375	.040	.307						

In *Model 3*, self-regulated learning was added. Adding self-regulated learning ( $\beta = .307$ ,  $p = .000$ ) further improved the model,  $\Delta R^2 = .051$ ,  $p = .000$ , with the final model explaining 45.9% of the variance in SPE ( $R^2 = .459$ ). The final model was statistically significant,  $F(4,904) = 191.862$ ,  $p = .000$ , explaining an additional 5.1% of the variance of SPE.

Given the data analysis, the result of this study confirmed three (3) previously stated hypotheses. That self-regulated learning ( $\beta = .307$ ,  $p = .000$ ); learning skills ( $\beta = .253$ ,  $p = .000$ ); life skills ( $\beta = .170$ ,  $p = .000$ ); and psychological entitlement ( $\beta = .077$ ,  $p = .000$ ) influence self-perceived employability.

$$\text{SPE} = .485 + .375 \text{SRL} + .270 \text{LeS} + .163 \text{LiS} + .062 \text{PE}$$

The hierarchical regression analysis reveals that psychological entitlement (PE) accounts for a small portion of the variance in self-perceived employability ( $R^2 = .095$ ), aligning with findings from Gonzales's (2023) study. However, incorporating 21st-century skills—such as learning and life skills—substantially strengthens the model's predictive capacity. These soft skills, which indicate critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, digital literacy, flexibility, initiative, and leadership, are vital for enhancing students' self-perceived employability. The link between employability and learning skills in education has been investigated from various perspectives, including university recruiters (Moy, 2006), faculty (Aistrich et al., 2006), and employers (Finch et al., 2013). Self-regulated learning and 21st-century skills have been proven significant predictors of self-perceived employability (SPE). Both self-regulated learning ( $\beta = .375$ ) and learning skills ( $\beta = .253$ ) are strong predictors of SPE, even when accounting for psychological entitlement and life skills. Students who excel in self-regulated learning and demonstrate strong learning skills are likelier to view themselves as employable. The increase in explained variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .051$ ) underscores the critical importance of these factors in preparing students for the job market. Aisyawati, Suryaratri, and Akbar (2024) demonstrated that self-regulated learning during university courses helps students achieve their academic goals in theoretical and practical contexts and enhances their sense of employability, thereby improving their prospects for securing desirable employment. Recent research has further confirmed that self-regulation strategies in learning are essential to employability. Similarly, earlier studies have established a significant link between self-regulated learning, personal goal setting, and SPE (Putri, 2019; Cinches et al., 2021). Botha (2021), referencing Quiring et al. (2017), emphasized that modern employers seek candidates with job-specific skills and critical employability skills such as effective communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving—decisive for organizational success.

Self-perceived employability is crucial in shaping a successful career for young adults, reflecting their perceptions and beliefs about their potential success in the graduate labor market (Pitan & Muller, 2020, as cited by Aydin, 2022). This study indicates that self-perceived employability is significantly influenced by self-regulated learning and students' self-assessment of their 21st-century skills. These results suggest that interventions to enhance self-regulated learning and 21st-century skills could effectively boost students' self-perceived employability. Enhanced self-perceived employability provides students with greater confidence to explore the job market.

## Conclusions and Implications

This study examined self-perceived employability and provided compelling evidence that self-regulated learning, learning skills, life skills, and psychological entitlement can predict it. Of these factors, self-regulated learning and learning skills have the strongest impact, underscoring their critical role in preparing students for the job market. While psychological entitlement contributes to self-perceived employability, it accounts for only a small portion of the variance, indicating that intrinsic motivation, the ability to manage one's learning, and the development of essential life skills are far more valuable for employability. The predictive power of the models is further strengthened by incorporating 21st-century skills—measured through critical thinking, creativity, communication, and leadership. These soft skills play a crucial role in shaping students' perceptions of their employability and readiness for the workforce.

This indicates that educational institutions should prioritize the development of these competencies to better prepare students for future career opportunities. The study highlights the need for a well-rounded educational approach focusing on academic achievements and cultivating vital life and learning skills that influence students' perceptions of their employability. Improving students' self-perceived employability through targeted interventions—such as constructive teacher feedback, peer collaboration, and engaging performance tasks that promote self-direction and substantial internship experiences—helps position them more effectively for successful employment.

Since this study focused only on healthcare undergraduate students, replicating the same survey on non-healthcare students may contribute to the generalizability of the findings, where a more institutional approach for interventions may be designed to enhance students' self-perceived employability, vis-à-vis improving their opportunities in the labor market.

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# Assessing Stakeholders' Feedback toward Developing, Implementing, and Evaluating Institutional Action Plans for Continuous Improvement

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## ABSTRACT

Stakeholder satisfaction is crucial for sustainability, enabling organizations to assess their strengths and weaknesses and enhance service quality. This descriptive study analyzed the satisfaction levels of various stakeholders of a maritime university from AY 2018-2019 to AY 2022-2023. **Univariate Time Series Analysis** illustrated satisfaction trends, while mean scores assessed satisfaction levels across groups which include the students, employees, parents, alumni, and industry partners. Results indicated a consistently high satisfaction level among employees, albeit with fluctuations. Alumni and parents expressed high satisfaction, while students reported moderate satisfaction. The findings suggest a need for continuous improvements to meet stakeholder expectations across all operational aspects. Consequently, a three-year institutional plan to address stakeholders' feedback was developed, implemented, and evaluated based on these results. This approach aims to enhance service quality and stakeholder relationships, ultimately fostering goodwill and effective partnerships within the maritime education sector.

**Keywords:** Stakeholders' feedback, Stakeholders' satisfaction, Institutional plans, Continuous improvement

## Introduction

Satisfaction is an individual's sense of happiness derived from fulfilling or disappointing their needs and desires based on comparing perceived performance to their expectations (Rihayana et al., 2021; Safi, 2020; Weerasinghe et al., 2017). This affective reaction is vital in many situations, such as stakeholder satisfaction surveys that enable people to express their views on initiatives and laws that impact their lives. These kinds of feedback mechanisms are critical to the sustainability of an organization because they enable establishments to pinpoint the advantages and disadvantages of the services they provide and to cultivate productive relationships with a range of stakeholders, including owners, staff, clients, and governmental bodies (Aggarwal-Gupta, 2010).

It is essential to comprehend stakeholders' perspectives, especially those of students, parents, and alumni, to improve institutional performance and educational offerings. Universities can modify their courses to better suit industry demands and societal expectations by using these groups' insights, ultimately enhancing student welfare and employability (Merrill, 2024). Maritime institutions can improve their operational procedures and instructional tactics by methodically examining input from various stakeholders. This can result in cooperative efforts like research projects and internships that enhance the educational process (Astika et al., 2022; Bangwal & Tiwari, 2018; Guo et al., 2022; Kaya & Ceylan, 2014).

## Statement of the Problem

Educational institutions are increasingly pressured to meet their stakeholders' diverse needs and expectations, including students, faculty, staff, parents, and employers. To enhance stakeholder satisfaction, particularly in alignment with ISO 21001:2018 standards, the maritime institution in this study requires a consistent mechanism for gathering and addressing feedback. This feedback is essential for improving quality, benchmarking progress, and identifying competency gaps. However, the institution must also consider effectively utilizing this feedback to benefit all internal and external stakeholders.

This study aims to shed light on the feedback from stakeholders, including parents, students, alumni, and industry partners, which can be utilized to improve this maritime university's operation plans and curricula. The findings of this study can help the institution identify program strengths and deficiencies and ensure



that the curriculum and the related services it provides stay relevant to industry demands and social expectations.

## Objectives of the Study

The following research questions were addressed in this study: (1) What is the level of satisfaction of the different groups of stakeholders, namely, the parents, students, employees, industry partners, and alumni, with the services of the institution? (2) What trend has been observed in the stakeholders' satisfaction levels in the past five years? (3) What concerns were expressed by the stakeholders in their feedback? and (4) What initiatives were taken by the departments concerned to address the stakeholders' feedback?

## Framework

Freeman's Stakeholders' Theory posits that the stakeholders are vital to the survival and success of the organization (Harrison et al., 2015). This theory emphasizes that service providers must develop strategies to satisfy their stakeholders, recognizing the moral obligation to inform those affected by their operations and the strategic importance of valuing stakeholder feedback. In Maritime Higher Educational Institutions (MHEIs), engaging with stakeholders through effective feedback mechanisms is crucial for aligning educational practices with industry needs, ultimately fostering a global consciousness for sustainability and meeting stakeholders' expectations.

In line with the institution's Integrated Management System Policy, which seeks to surpass stakeholders' needs and expectations, this study highlights the significance of stakeholder feedback. A yearly satisfaction survey determines staff, students, parents, alumni, and industry partners' satisfaction with the institution's services. The supervision, work environment, university policies, workload, pay, and amenities are considered when evaluating employee satisfaction. Numerous services, like accounting, student affairs, registration, and library services, are used to gauge students' satisfaction. Customer service, manner and promptness, amenities, transaction clarity, and coordination are the main factors determining how satisfied parents are. Alumni support from the university and other alumni and their experiences in the classroom and practicum are used to gauge how satisfied the alumni are. When it comes to the industry partners, satisfaction is measured on competence encompassing knowledge, skills (hard and soft skills), attitude, and cadets' demonstration of the graduate attributes they are expected to practice in their respective companies. Figure 1 shows the paradigm of the study.

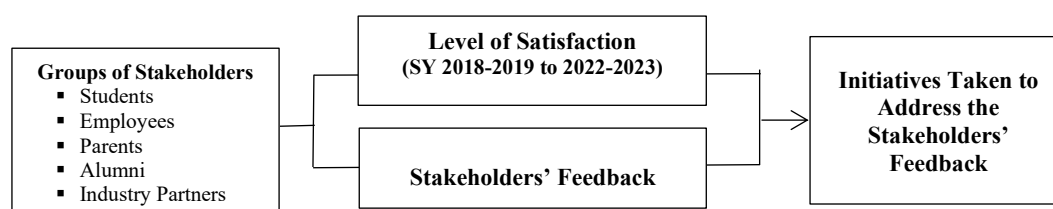


Figure 1: Paradigm of the study

## Methodology

A descriptive research design was utilized to assess stakeholder satisfaction levels, trends over the past five years, major concerns expressed in feedback, and departmental initiatives to address these concerns. Data were collected primarily through surveys and focus group discussions with industry partners from shipping companies. This study analyzed data from annual stakeholder satisfaction surveys conducted by the Research Department from 2018-2019 to 2022-2023. The surveys utilized stratified random sampling for employees and students and convenience sampling for parents, alumni, and industry partners. The distribution of respondents per year is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents

Groups of Stakeholders	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Employees	123	120	164	149	110
Students	197	197	187	203	480
Parents	30	39	120	116	120
Alumni	119	152	206	158	135
Industry Partners	22	28	26	23	20

Separate sets of survey instruments designed by the university research team were utilized and administered to the different groups of stakeholders. The survey instrument for the employees comprised 30 indicators designed to measure the employees' job satisfaction with the following components: Supervision and Empowerment, Work Environment, University Policies, Workload and Salary, and Facilities and equipment. Student satisfaction was measured through the services provided by the following offices: Accounting/Finance, Student Affairs and Services, Registration, Dean's Office, Laboratory, Library, Services and Facilities, Cashiering, Canteen, and Information System. Each indicator comprises five to 10 items specific to the office/department evaluated. The survey used for the parents' level of satisfaction was composed of 10 items. The evaluation centered on several key aspects of their visit to the school, including how well they were accommodated, the promptness in addressing their concerns, the treatment they received from staff, their impression of the office ambiance, their observations of the processes in place, and whether they would recommend the school to others for enrollment. The alumni were asked about their level of satisfaction in terms of the contribution of the following to their present job/employment: Classroom Experience, Practicum Experience, Co-Curricular Experience, the efforts exerted by their Alma Mater in improving its services to serve the students and the alumni better, and the Overall performance of their fellow alumni who work in the same company as them. Open spaces were also provided to the employees, students, alumni, and parents for their comments and suggestions.

Each survey instrument uses a 10-point Likert Scale to determine the stakeholders' level of satisfaction with the institution's delivery of services, where 10 is the highest and 1 is the lowest.

The survey questionnaires were face and content validated by three jurors who are experts in the field of research. Their corrections and suggestions were reflected to improve the instruments further. For reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the instrument's internal consistency. The questionnaires were administered to 30 respondents who were not part of the study. The results obtained the following values: Student Questionnaire:  $\alpha = .96$ ; Parent Questionnaire:  $\alpha = .94$ ; Employee Questionnaire:  $\alpha = .96$ ; Alumni Questionnaire:  $\alpha = .93$ ; and Industry Questionnaire:  $\alpha = .94$ .

In the data analysis, Univariate Time Series Analysis, or analyzing a single variable over time (Jeong & Kim, 2012; Yen, 2023), was used to identify the trend in the level of satisfaction of the different groups of stakeholders from AY 2018-2019 to AY 2022-2023. A line graph was used to present the trend in the level of satisfaction. Moreover, the Mean was used to determine the satisfaction level of the stakeholders. The following scale was used to interpret the Mean.

Scale	Interpretation	Description
1.00-3.90	Low	Unsatisfied with the services rendered by the institution
4.00-7.00	Moderate	Somewhat satisfied with the services rendered by the institution
7.10-10.00	High	Very satisfied with the services rendered by the institution

To identify the concerns expressed by the stakeholders in their feedback, thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006) cited in Caulfield (2019), was applied by closely examining the data to identify common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly. Concerns mentioned by at least five respondents in the open-ended part of the survey were considered significant. Thematization in this study followed three simple steps: clustering the feedback under similar codes or categories, defining and naming themes, and writing up. Finally, this study reports the action plans and initiatives formed by the

departments concerned to address the stakeholders' feedback and the evaluation made to assess the extent of accomplishment of the action plans after they were implemented in AY 2023-2024.

To ensure ethical conduct, researchers obtained informed consent, maintained confidentiality, anonymized findings, and fostered a respectful environment conducive to open dialogue, thereby protecting participants and safeguarding the integrity of the study.

## Results

### *Stakeholders' Levels of Satisfaction*

Figure 1 reports a high level of satisfaction among the employees for the past five years, with some fluctuations at certain points, where the most evident decline was noted in the satisfaction level of industry partners (2020-2021:  $M = 6.3$ ), which shifted from high to moderate. Satisfaction levels across groups, except that of the industry partners, declined at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 but gradually recovered the following year. However, all others showed a slight decline except for the alumni, which increased from 2022 to 2023.

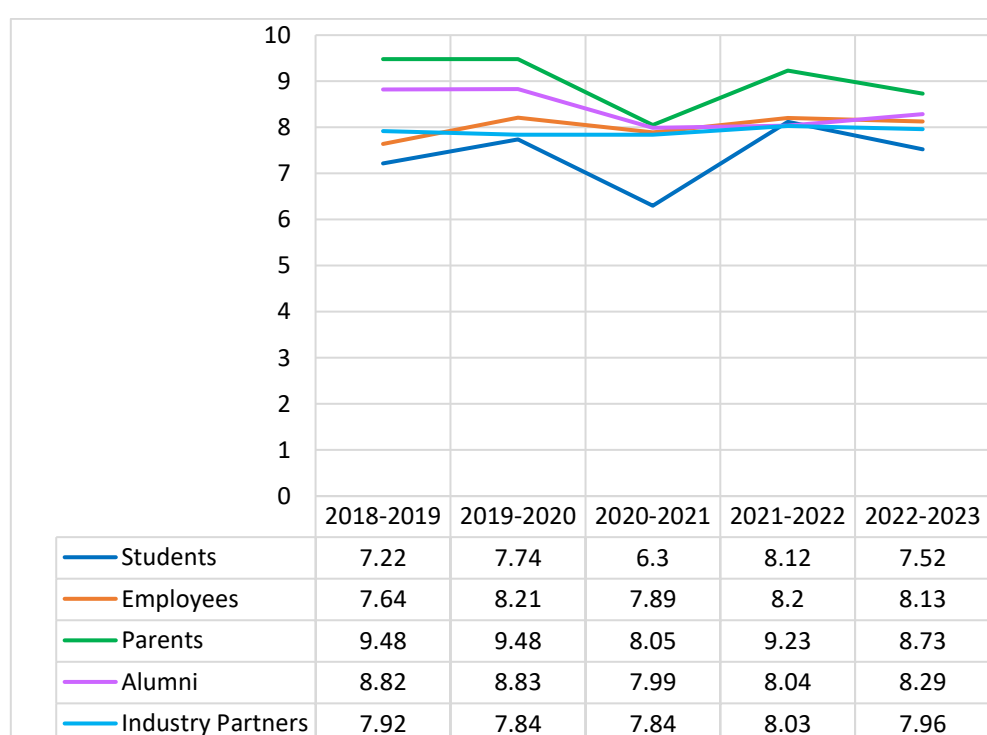


Figure 2: Satisfaction level of different groups of stakeholders

These findings highlight the transient nature of stakeholders' satisfaction, influenced heavily by external events like the pandemic, and suggest that while recovery is possible, it may only be sustained across some groups unless it considers certain crucial factors.

Some experts have provided possible explanations for the decline in the stakeholders' level of satisfaction. For instance, Habel et al. (2016) pointed out that sometimes, the problem is not that the service is worsening but that stakeholders' expectations are rising. Their experiences and comparisons with competing institutions shape stakeholders' service expectations. This indicates that organizations must continually evaluate their performance and adapt to evolving societal expectations and global trends to maintain a competitive edge. A study by Arendt et al. (2017) investigated themes or patterns in the strategies used by organizations and individuals facing crises or threatened reputations and found that corrective action is the most successful and third most common strategy. The administration's reinforcement and support are crucial in helping the institution regain its reputation and satisfy customer expectations.

Studies have identified crucial factors that contribute to stakeholders' satisfaction. For the employees, a strong Human Resources Department that enhances employee motivation and job satisfaction is essential for improving performance and contributing positively to organizational success, as satisfied employees perform better and contribute significantly to the upliftment of their organizations (Abboodi et al., 2020; Inayat & Jahanzeb Khan, 2021).

Recent studies have identified key factors influencing student satisfaction in higher education, including teaching quality, administrative services, welfare, university facilities, and practical training, highlighting the multidimensional nature of satisfaction and the necessity for institutions to address both academic and non-academic aspects to enhance the overall student experience (Syahmer et al., 2022; Kuzehgar & Sorourkhah, 2024; Tandilashvili, 2019).

Parental satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors, including school features and culture, teacher-child interaction, teacher-parent communication, peer interactions, teacher capacity, curriculum standards, school environment, technological equipment, teacher-student ratio, physical facilities, student safety and security, educational services, staff responsiveness, school location, active learning processes, adequate facilities, effective leadership, extracurricular options, parental involvement, and cost (Fauyan et al., 2024; Hussain et al., 2019; Koutsampelas et al., 2019).

Alumni satisfaction and engagement, on the other hand, are heavily influenced by the professionalism of lecturers, the relevance of the curriculum, and the quality of facilities, indicating that institutions should prioritize these aspects to foster ongoing relationships with their alumni (Nisar et al., 2024; Wiranto & Slameto, 2021).

As for industry partners, perceptions of satisfaction are influenced by internship performance (Muflih, 2021), graduate employability (Sinha et al., 2019), and the digitalization of higher education institutions in keeping with the fast-evolving technological advancement (Stoyanova & Stoyanov, 2024).

The findings from the studies suggest significant implications for enhancing stakeholder satisfaction across various sectors, particularly in educational institutions and organizations. For employees, emphasizing a strong Human Resources Department highlights the need for organizations to prioritize employee motivation and job satisfaction, as these factors directly correlate with improved performance and overall organizational success. This indicates that institutions should invest in HR strategies that foster a supportive work environment, enhancing employee engagement and productivity.

For students and parents, these experiences underscore the necessity for educational institutions to address academic and non-academic factors. By focusing on teaching quality, administrative services, and the overall school environment, institutions can create a more satisfying experience for students and their families. Furthermore, the importance of alumni engagement and industry partnerships suggests that maintaining strong relationships with these stakeholders is crucial for long-term success. Institutions should prioritize feedback mechanisms and continuous improvement initiatives to adapt to evolving expectations, ensuring sustained stakeholder satisfaction and enhancing their competitive edge in the educational landscape.

### ***Concerns Expressed by the Stakeholders in Their Feedback***

The thematic analysis of data from open-ended questions in the survey for employees, students, parents, and alumni, as well as the focus group discussions with industry partners, revealed key themes that highlighted concerns and issues requiring attention from the institution. Student feedback focused on a complex enrolment process, inadequate personnel during peak times, a noisy library, insufficient internet service, delayed announcements, and slow responses to queries, while employee concerns included inconsistent policy implementation, unreasonable deadlines, additional assignments affecting personal time, and unfair teaching load distribution. Parents and alumni emphasized the need for improved school facilities and timely communication, with alumni also noting slow query responses, delays in processing degree requirements, a weak alumni association, and inadequate job placement assistance; industry partners raised concerns about deteriorating discipline, inadequate communication skills, weak seafaring

values and skills, medical issues, poor math skills, and commitment and loyalty to the company. Figure 3 graphically presents the concerns and issues clustered from each group of stakeholders.

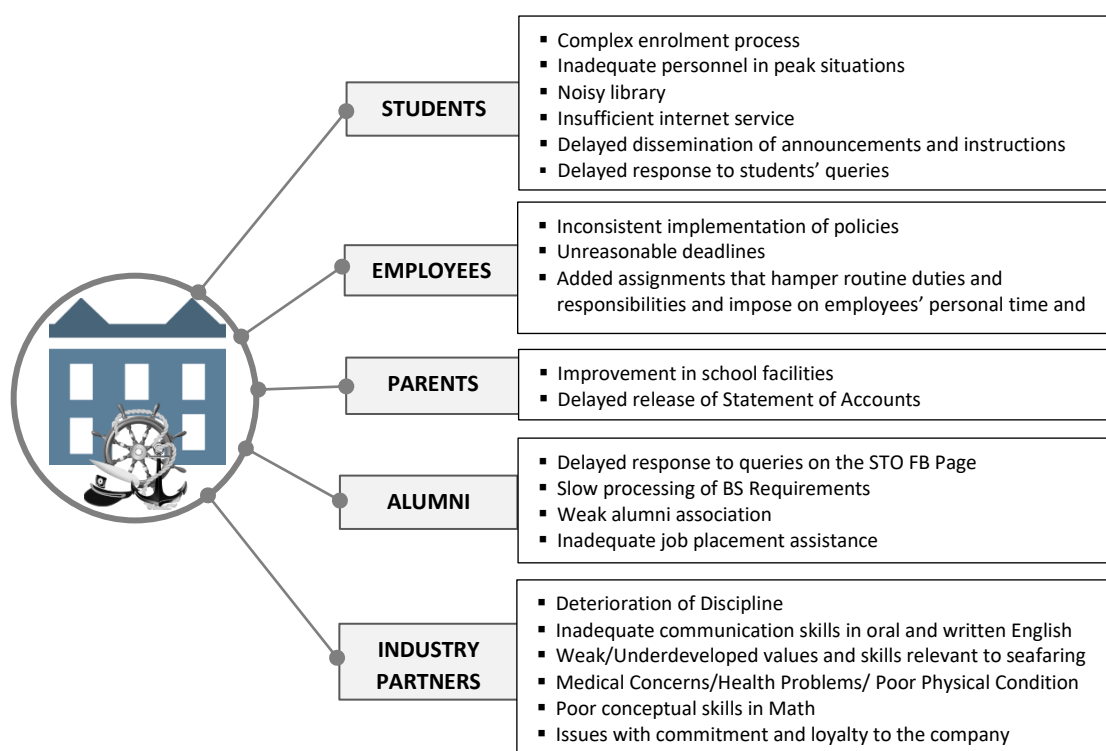


Figure 3: Thematized feedback of stakeholders

### ***Institutional Initiatives to Address Stakeholders' Feedback***

Every institution needs to engage the stakeholders, listen to their feedback, and take their concerns seriously (Astika et al., 2022; Bangwal & Tiwari, 2018; Guo et al., 2022; Kaya & Ceylan, 2014; Merrill, 2024). As an annual institutional practice, all stakeholder feedback is consolidated, thematically analyzed, and discussed during a Management Review with the Administrative Committee to evaluate performance and identify priority issues. The thematized concerns are referred to relevant departments, which develop detailed action plans with target implementation dates. At the end of the academic year, the same group reconvenes to assess the status of the implemented interventions, with supporting documents provided for audit and verification purposes.

In the interest of space, only one page of the matrix is shown in Table 2, particularly on the feedback gathered from the industry partners through the shipping company representatives.

Table 2: Addressing Industry Feedback

Thematized Feedback	Department(s)/Area(s) Responsible	Initiatives/Strategies (Action Plans)	Target Date of Implementation	Status of Accomplishment (Percentage)	Evidence
<b>Deterioration of Discipline</b>	Dean-CME, SAHs-CME, Discipline Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspect the uniform, haircut, and paraphernalia before the start of the class.</li> <li>Create a policy addressed to ALL INSTRUCTORS to discuss the policy on courtesy and discipline, dress code (uniform, shoes, belt, socks,) allowable accessories, conversational manners, proper posture, proper carriage (walking, sitting), proper use of cell phones, and the like.</li> <li>Strictly implement policy on rendering a proper salute.</li> <li>Conduct Student General Orientation</li> <li>Discuss during the faculty meeting</li> </ul>	AY 2023-2024 & Onward	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memorandum addressed to all class advisers</li> <li>Program/Attendance during the Orientation of Students</li> <li>Student Manual</li> <li>Minutes of the Meeting</li> <li>Program and Photos</li> </ul>
<b>Inadequate communication skills (oral and written)</b>	Deans, Principal, SAHs, and PHs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do unlocking of difficulties before the start of the class (five vocabulary words every meeting) across all subjects.</li> <li>Emphasize learning of oral and writing skills across all subjects.</li> <li>Implement the English-speaking policy in all English classes. For non-English classes, encourage minimal use of the vernacular.</li> </ul>	AY 2023-2024 & Onward	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memorandum for SAH of General Education/ Languages area to ensure implementation of the strategies (Same for 2 to 5)</li> <li>List of Learning Competencies</li> <li>Performance Tasks</li> <li>Signages and Posters</li> </ul>
<b>Poor conceptual skills, especially in mathematics</b>	SAH-Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include topics specific to the shipping companies' expectations in the review class.</li> <li>College Math instructors to coordinate/meet with Math teachers in Basic Education to address topics covered in the company assessments and professional college courses.</li> </ul>	AY 2023-2024 & Onward	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record of Attendance</li> <li>Outputs of students during the review class in Mathematics and Sciences</li> </ul>
Weak/Underdeveloped values and skills relevant to seafaring	Deans, Principal, SAHs, PHs, SAS, QA, Deans, Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Values sharing with emphasis on target values (loyalty, initiative, commitment, self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, adaptability, flexibility, and the like)</li> </ul>	AY 2023-2024 & Onward	100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copy of the Program</li> <li>List of sections assigned for values sharing</li> </ul>

## Conclusions

The findings of this study show that stakeholder satisfaction can change quickly over time. While recovery is possible, it will only last for some groups if essential factors are considered. This paper underscores the critical importance of addressing stakeholder satisfaction across various sectors to sustain a consistently high level of satisfaction. Prioritizing employee motivation and job satisfaction is important to improve organizational performance by fostering a more engaged, productive workforce, reducing turnover rates, and ultimately increasing profitability. By acknowledging the multidimensional nature of student and parental experiences, institutions can enhance satisfaction by improving teaching quality, administrative services, and overall school environments. Fostering strong relationships with alumni and industry partners is essential for long-term success, necessitating effective feedback mechanisms and continuous improvement initiatives. The thematic analysis of stakeholder feedback reveals specific areas requiring attention, such as enrolment processes, communication issues, and improved facilities. Institutions must meet these evolving expectations to remain competitive in the maritime industry. These arguments align with Freeman's Stakeholders Theory, which emphasizes that all stakeholders are vital to an organization's success, making it essential for educational institutions to conduct satisfaction surveys to understand and address their needs. Acting on survey results fulfills ethical obligations and reinforces stakeholder trust and engagement, ensuring long-term institutional success. Moreover, gathering and addressing stakeholders' feedback strengthens the institution's Integrated Management System Policy, which seeks to surpass stakeholders' needs and expectations.

### Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the following significant recommendations may be considered by the administration:

1. The Human Resource Department may prioritize enhancing the department's strategies that focus on employee motivation and job satisfaction, fostering a supportive work environment that enhances engagement and productivity.
2. The institution may also consider implementing effective feedback mechanisms that allow for continuous engagement with students, parents, alumni, and industry partners, ensuring that their diverse needs and concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.
3. The institution should adopt a holistic approach to enhance academic and non-academic factors affecting stakeholder satisfaction, such as improving teaching quality, administrative services, communication, and facilities. It should also strengthen relationships with alumni and industry partners to ensure long-term success and adaptability to changing expectations.
4. As this study is only limited to data gathered through survey questionnaires and some open-ended questions, future research may gather thicker qualitative data through interviews or dialogues with focal persons representing the different groups of stakeholders for more substantial feedback. This can help identify unique concerns and suggestions that may not be fully expressed through structured survey questions, ensuring that all voices are heard. Thicker qualitative data can lead to more actionable insights for institutional improvement. By understanding the "why" behind stakeholder feedback, educational institutions can better tailor their strategies to meet the needs and expectations of their diverse audience.

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# A Study of Cultural Diversity Integrated in Project Based Learning to Improve Student Creativity

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## ABSTRACT

Cultural diversity in Indonesia makes the Indonesian nation continue to make developments in various aspects of education in Indonesia, so that with this diversity each student has their own mindset to be able to see problems around and develop ideas or innovate with their respective creativity. This study aims to analyze the dimensions of creativity of students with diverse cultural backgrounds who can create innovations through Project Based Learning. This research material is Green Chemistry which is limited to the principle of preventing waste using a qualitative research design with a sample of 35 Don Bosco 1 high school students using the Project Based Learning model. Data collection techniques were interviews, project work, and student reflection data. The researcher found that the level of thinking of people in Indonesia is also influenced by their environment and the culture they bring. In its development, the benefits of cultural diversity are caused by cultural acculturation, but it does not eliminate the characteristics of each. However, it adds to the diversity of Indonesian culture to become richer. In 1 class with 35 students, they must have different cultural backgrounds even though they are in the same region, so with this diversity, each student has their own mindset to be able to see the problems around them and develop their ideas or innovate with their respective creativity.

**Keywords:** Culture, Green Chemistry, Creativity

## Introduction

Indonesia is a country with diverse cultures and religions in each region. With a total of 1,728 cultural heritages and 6 religions spread across 38 provinces in Indonesia. This diversity makes Indonesian people dependent on each other despite the differences. Culture in Indonesia is very diverse, not only language problems, but the arts that Indonesian culture has are also very much. Cultural diversity is the entire social and religious structure in which knowledge, beliefs, arts, and customs exist in a society that is passed down from one generation to the next (Alifia, 2021). Many of the Indonesian people with their migrant cultural backgrounds often urbanize or ruralize so that the culture they bring from their place of origin can adapt to a new place.

The word culture comes from the Sanskrit “buddhayah” which is the plural form of buddhi which means mind or reason. Therefore culture is closely related to mind and reason (Akhmad, 2020). Meanwhile, the word culture in English is culture and while in Dutch it is cultuur. Both languages come from the Latin word *colere* which means to process or do. Culture can also be inferred from the words *budi* and *daya* which means in the form of creation, *karsa* and taste. Therefore, whatever Indonesian people create or the knowledge they have must not be far from the cultural background they believe in.

The diversity of cultures in Indonesia makes the Indonesian nation continue to make developments in various aspects of education. Education is an investment path prepared for children as the next generation who will continue economic improvement both individually for their families and in groups for their communities so that education becomes the foundation for the success of industrial development and economic improvement (Simanjuntak, 2017). Aspects of education in Indonesia, such as curriculum development, improvement of learning media, development of teacher administration, and so on. The curriculum is a teaching plan or a number of subjects arranged systematically to complete a program to obtain a diploma (Rouf and Suryaman, 2020). The curriculum should be adapted to the values and context of local culture in order to increase the ideas and work of the community. In this case, it is in line with Koentjaraningrat's (1993) view regarding the meaning that culture is all ideas and works created by humans who must be familiarized with learning and the overall result of their ethics.

Therefore, developments in the field of education, one of which is the curriculum, are the result of the overall habits of Indonesian society or culture in learning so as to create the Merdeka Curriculum as a form of ideas and work (Koesoema, 2020). For example, teaching materials that include history, language and local traditions make learning relevant to the daily lives of students so that it creates students' interest in learning materials (Wahyuningtias, 2020). The curriculum currently used by Indonesia is an independent curriculum with 6 dimensions of the Pancasila learner profile as its goal so that it not only produces students with high knowledge but also character (Lilihata et al, 2023 and Zakso, 2022). One of them is the creativity dimension (Rahayu, 2022). In this case, researchers see that the level of thinking of the Indonesian people is also influenced by their environment and the culture they carry.

In its development, the benefits of this cultural diversity are cultural acculturation, but it does not eliminate the characteristics of each but adds to the rich diversity of Indonesian culture. On the one hand, cultural diversity in Indonesia reflects the excellence and pride of the country. On the other hand, this cultural heritage can also threaten the integrity of the nation if not properly preserved. Globalization and technological advances have caused cultural degradation and affected character changes and moral shifts of the younger generation in Indonesia, including students in higher education institutions (Listiana, 2021). Efforts to preserve culture can be made by incorporating culture into the learning process, especially science. The integration of cultural aspects in science learning brings a new "flavor" to learning that can increase students' interest in science, and lead them to build strong connections between learning experiences in the classroom and everyday life. In 1 class with 35 students, there must be different cultural backgrounds even though they are in the same region, so with this diversity, each student has their own mindset to be able to see the problems around and develop their ideas or innovate with their respective creativity.

With the independent curriculum, a teacher can freely prepare his learning creatively and interestingly (Suprpto et al., 2021). Therefore, researchers see that the Project Based Learning model should also be able to increase the creativity of students. Project Based Learning is a type of learner-centered learning where teachers help and motivate students while providing guidance to improve their skills, helping them become more independent students (Padwa and Wahyuni, 2021). This is because students can innovate freely to achieve the expected learning outcomes. Another problem in the world of chemistry education is to produce students who can apply chemistry positively in everyday life. Where so far chemistry has always been known as an abstract science, Project Based Learning is a contextual-based learning model so that they can apply the 12 principles of Green Chemistry in everyday life to achieve the SDGs (Zimmerman, 2020). Through this research, researchers want to see how the dimensions of creativity of each student based on their respective cultural backgrounds through Project Based Learning.

## Research Methods

In this study, the type of approach used is a qualitative approach and the type of research used is a qualitative descriptive method. Margono (2010: 8) and Fadli (2021) state that descriptive research is a research method that seeks to provide systematically and carefully the actual facts and characteristics of certain populations that aim to solve actual problems faced now and collect data or information to be compiled, explained, and analyzed.

This research was conducted at Don Bosco High School in Jakarta. The population in this study were all X-IPA class students at Don Bosco High School in the 2024/2025 school year. Data collection was carried out using the saturated sample method, that is, the entire existing population was sampled (Jati, 2017). The sample consisted of 35 students. Data collection methods in this study used test and non-test methods. The results obtained are students' points when given pretest and posttest questions. For non-test methods, the Project Based Learning model data collection is observation (Nasution, 2016). According to Mugianto (2017), observation is a systematic process that includes observing, reviewing, and recording objects based on what is seen, heard, and felt. This observation is used to observe the teacher's actions in applying the Project Based Learning model and the response of students in receiving learning. Observation is carried out during the process of implementing the action.

Furthermore, researchers analyzed the data using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistical analysis is statistics used to analyze data by describing the results of projects that have been created by samples (Martias, 2021). Descriptive statistics is a part of statistics regarding data collection, presentation, determination of statistical values, making diagrams or pictures about something, here the data is presented in a form that is easier to understand or read.

## Results and Discussion

The activity stages in the Project Based Learning model are divided into 3, namely the introduction stage, the core activity stage and the closing. This preliminary activity is carried out to strengthen character education. In the core activities, there are 6 syntaxes carried out, namely Basic Questions, Designing Product Planning, Developing a Manufacturing Schedule, Monitoring Project Activity and Development, Testing Results, Evaluating Learning Experiences and the last is the closing which contains the conclusion of the learning process (Ardiansyah, 2020). Before giving treatment, researchers carry out preliminary activities such as praying before starting learning, checking student attendance and conveying the objectives and material to be learned, this is done so that students are better prepared to receive learning. Then the researcher gave a pretest instrument to measure students' initial abilities in the form of questions using Mentimeter software (attachment 3) and written answers.

In the first question regarding how students felt when they first heard chemistry class, the researcher saw that students had an interest in chemistry classes this was because chemistry learning was introduced when students took middle school so that when the second question was given "How did you feel the first time you heard the word chemistry?" students had mixed responses.

Pertanyaan	Jawaban
1. Bagaimana perasaan kamu pertama kali mendengar kelas kimia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Apakah menarik gak ya? (<i>is it Interesting?</i>)</li><li>- Wow Amazing keren banget (<i>Wow amazing, so cool</i>)</li><li>- Aku terharu (<i>i'm so moved</i>)</li><li>- Deg-degan tapi penasaran (<i>nervous but curious</i>)</li></ul>

Pertanyaan	Jawaban
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mencoba bahan-bahan kimia (<i>Try chemicals</i>)</li> <li>- Kepo (<i>nosy</i>)</li> <li>- Nice</li> <li>- Agak Khawatir (<i>a bit worried</i>)</li> <li>- Sepertinya susah (<i>seems difficult</i>)</li> <li>- Sepertinya menantang (<i>Seems challenging</i>)</li> <li>- Interesting</li> <li>- Pasti ada praktek (<i>There must be practice</i>)</li> <li>- Takut banget (<i>really scared</i>)</li> <li>- Banyak hafalan (lots of memorization)</li> <li>- eksperimen</li> <li>- Keren (<i>Cool</i>)</li> <li>- <i>Awesome</i></li> <li>- Penasaran (<i>curious</i>)</li> <li>- Semoga bisa mengerjakan (<i>Hopefully it can work</i>)</li> <li>- <i>so good so good</i></li> </ul> <p>etc.</p>
2. Bagaimana perasaan kamu pertaman kali mendengar kata kimia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mungkin cepat nangkep (<i>maybe i will fast understand</i>)</li> <li>- Bikin pusing dan bingung (<i>makes me dizzy and confused</i>)</li> <li>- gak tau biasa aja (<i>I don't know, it's just normal</i>)</li> <li>- Lab (<i>Laboratory</i>)</li> <li>- <i>Potion</i></li> <li>- <i>Netral</i></li> <li>- Semoga seru (<i>hope it's fun</i>)</li> <li>- Biasa Aja (<i>it's just normal</i>)</li> <li>- IPA (<i>sains</i>)</li> <li>- Tabel periodik (<i>periodic table</i>)</li> <li>- Susah (<i>difficult</i>)</li> <li>- Takut gak bisa (<i>I'm afraid I can't</i>)</li> <li>- <i>Nice</i></li> <li>- Pusing (<i>dizzy</i>)</li> <li>- Mungkin susah (<i>maybe it's difficult</i>)</li> <li>- <i>Interesting</i></li> <li>- Exited dan penasaran (<i>excited and curious</i>)</li> <li>- Agak grogi (<i>a bit nervous</i>)</li> <li>- Tabel Periodik (<i>periodic table</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Etc</p>

Table 1: Mentimeter results answers

After obtaining pretest data as initial data, treatment was given in accordance with the stages of Project Based Learning. The first stage of Project Based Learning is, researchers provide basic questions about green chemistry. The questions consisted of (1) have students ever heard of green chemistry, (2) give your opinion about green chemistry, (3) why do green chemistry and examples of problems about green chemistry? Learners then actively answer according to what learners understand that according to learner's green chemistry is one of the government programs, then say that green chemistry is the process of greening the earth.

Green chemistry is done to reduce damage to the earth and examples of green chemistry problems are damage to the ozone layer, burning garbage, indiscriminate waste disposal and many more things. The researcher provided alternating opportunities for students to answer each question posed. After the learners answered, the researcher then explained that green chemistry is not just a government program but rather a program for all Indonesian people to reduce adverse

environmental impacts associated with chemical processes and the chemical industry. The main function of Green Chemistry is to replace chemical methods and reagents that are harmful and potentially damaging to the environment with solutions that are more environmentally friendly, efficient, and sustainable.

Then in the second stage, namely designing project planning, the researcher divides students into several groups and explains the project that will be carried out by students. This project is related to how to reduce waste or process waste and researchers ask learners to discuss with group friends regarding the design, materials and tools as well as the creativity they will make as an initial planning stage for making projects. At this stage, the researcher also gave one example such as ecoenzymes that utilize waste or household organic waste and the researcher also explained about the stages that learners must do in designing to complete the project. When learners were discussing, it was seen that the cultural background of learners was very influential. As in the group, there are learners whose background is from the Batak culture so that when expressing their opinions their voices are passionate and frontal while in another group there are learners whose background is Javanese so that when the group is discussing, the atmosphere looks calmer.

The next stage is to develop a manufacturing schedule, at this stage, students complete the project for 3 weeks. Then the results of the project will be presented and students are free to make their own creations. The fourth activity, the researcher monitors the activeness and development of the project for 3 consecutive weeks when students carry out the project in accordance with the design and schedule of project implementation. The researcher monitors and observes when the learners' group work is going well. At this stage, it is increasingly apparent that the learners' cultural background is very influential in group work.

One group consisted of several members with different cultural backgrounds, so during group discussions the atmosphere was not conducive. In this group discussion, it was also seen that the results that students made were not in accordance with the results of the initial discussion, so that no definite decision was obtained. In week 4 and stage 5, researchers and students tested the project results. Where each group will present the results of the project made by students. At this stage, the results of the assessment rubric did not provide significant results. This happens because the tools and materials used by each group are almost the same and have minimal differences. But from the results of the power point used and the results of the presentation of each group, the differences between each learner are clearly visible. That the delivery of information and innovation of each learner is different related to their cultural background. Then, in the last stage, researchers and students evaluate the learning experience. researchers and students make general conclusions from the results of the project that has been carried out including summarizing the answers to questions at the stage of determining the basic questions and questions of students during the presentation process. Then in the closing activity, the researcher and learners reflect on the learning process related to the mastery of the material, approach and learning model used.

Based on the results of the projects that students do, it can be seen that creativity is also influenced by the cultural background or local area that students have lived in. This can be seen from the results of written reflections and data collection with open-ended interview questions regarding cultural background. In the work of group 1 (Appendix 4) the majority of students' cultural background is DKI Jakarta where the area has environmental conditions with many vehicles, industries and waste management that must be better. The work made is a miniature of waste management. As in the reflection results, students have a view that the condition of the area they imagine is the condition of the Jakarta area where sometimes people underestimate waste. The miniatures in this work seem to reflect modern forms related to transportation or industrial activities. In the work of group 2 and group 3 (Appendix 4) learners have the idea to make miniature rice fields, based on the results of the reflection of the learners have the idea because in

the neighborhood where they live there are still rice fields and also agricultural land. The group has members with cultural backgrounds from rice-producing areas in Indonesia, one of which is a member who comes from the Indramayu area, East Java, Indonesia where the Indramayu area is the largest rice-producing area in Indonesia, then people with a background in the East Java area are known as hardworking people and focus on functional things in everyday life. In the context of art and design this is reflected in a preference for works that are simple but have a deep meaning.

The researcher sees that both works have cultural elements that are very close to the local culture of the East Java region and are proven by analyzing the cultural background of the learners' families. East Java has a culture that is closely related to agriculture and agrarian life. From the picture, there are farmer figures that reflect the life of agrarian society in East Java. This work also illustrates the people of East Java who like simplicity, the work made looks simple by using colors that reflect the relationship with nature. The use of simple materials makes this artwork characteristic of the creativity of the people of East Java who often utilize materials available in the surrounding environment.

In the work of group 4 (Appendix 4), based on the results of reflection, each group member has an idea by imagining the area of Central Java, Indonesia where this area still has agricultural land. The main theme in this work is compost, although the theme of compost is not part of the traditional culture of Central Java, but Central Javanese culture has a principle of life that seeks to balance with nature. Such as the “Tri Hita Karana” philosophy that teaches harmony between humans and the environment. The work that focuses on composting is in line with this philosophy, where attention to the preservation of nature and the wise use of natural resources become part of everyday life.

The work of group 5 (Appendix 4) the majority of students' cultural background is agriculture where the area has environmental conditions that are still a lot of land but less fertile. While chemical fertilizers are expensive, so students want to make compost or organic fertilizer from household waste for the sustainability of soil improvement. Creativity is shown by students during the process of planning products, making products (building knowledge, understanding and skills, developing products), presenting and evaluating products (Zakiah, 2020).

Visually, each work did not show any specific elements of the learner's regional culture such as motifs, traditional symbols or the use of language and script, but the works seemed to lead to a modern approach and the environment directly. So the researcher found that learners' creativity is the result of the interaction between the individual and the environment in which they grow up, including their cultural environment. Learners have mixed cultural backgrounds, even within the family environment, as seen in the interview data responses. Learners who are raised in a multicultural environment tend to have higher creative thinking skills because learners are more open to new ideas and are more innovative because diverse cultures provide more perspectives, symbols, and problem-solving methods so that they can increase the creativity of learners.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that the author has done, this research can be concluded that the implementation of the Project Based Learning model in the independent learning curriculum towards the Pancasila Student Profile (Creative) green chemistry material at Don Bosco 1 High School can increase the creativity of students due to the freedom of students in exploring the ideas that students have. This is because culture acts as a context that influences the way learners interact with ideas and they can express their creativity. This is in line with the Indonesian education system regarding the Merdeka Curriculum which supports various cultural expressions so as to develop students' creativity. From the work of each group, it can be analyzed

that the ideas and ideas channeled through the work are influenced by the cultural background or culture of the area where students live. This is because learning chemistry is not just calculating concentrations or analyzing chemicals, but learning sustainable chemistry or environmentally friendly chemistry.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1. Results of Learner Reflection

Kalau Boleh tau, Kamu berasal dari daerah mana sih?? atau memiliki latar belakang budaya apa?? 😊

- Sherafina: Sumatra Barat
- Bernard : Saya berasal dari Jakarta, lebih tepatnya Jakarta Timur
- Kenny : Saya berasal dari Jakarta, lebih tepatnya di Jakarta Utara
- VJ = Saya berasal dari Jakarta Utara.

Dipindai dengan CamScanner

Kalau Boleh tau, Kamu berasal dari daerah mana sih?? atau memiliki latar belakang budaya apa?? 😊

Kami berlima lahir dan dibesarkan di Jakarta . Karena Jakarta adalah kota yang besar, maka proses pengolahan limbah masih belum optimal. Dengan membuat kompos, setidaknya limbah rumah tangga dapat dijadikan menjadi sesuatu yang berguna .

Dipindai dengan CamScanner

Selama proses pembuatan karya ini, coba ceritakan apakah ada kondisi daerah yang kalian bayangkan? 😊

Kurang ada kondisi daerah yang dibayangkan. karena kami tinggal di perkotaan dan di perkotaan banyak orang yang menyepelkan sampah-sampah kecil seperti sisa makanan, tumbuhan mati, dan kotoran hewan .

Dipindai dengan CamScanner

Selama proses pembuatan karya ini, coba ceritakan apakah ada kondisi daerah yang kalian bayangkan? 😊

Daerah sawah tengah karena masih banyak lahan Pertanian dan menurut kita jika kita ~~tanam~~ membuat kompos bisa membuat pupuk yang bermanfaat bagi lahan pertanian.

Dipindai dengan CamScanner

Kalau Boleh tau, Kamu berasal dari daerah mana sih?? atau memiliki latar belakang budaya apa?? 😊

- Jakarta (Semua)
- Karena lingkungan sekitar kami memiliki sawah

Dipindai dengan CamScanner

## Appendix 2. Additional data on learners' cultural backgrounds

Coba ceritakan dari latar belakang budaya apakah kamu dan keluarga mu?

29 jawaban

saya lahir di jakarta, papa dari palembang dan mama dari makassar. kami keluarga keturunan chinese, besar di jakarta dan palembang.

Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta, keluarga dari mama saya dari suku Batak Karo dan keluarga bapak saya dari Jawa

Saya lahir dan besar jakarta utara daerah kelapa gading dan papa saya dari solo.

1. saya memiliki latar belakang campuran beberapa budaya, ibu saya dari sulawesi selatan dan bapak saya berasal dari bali. saya lahir di bali dan di besarkan di beberapa daerah (pindah-pindah)

2. saya lahir di bali dan besar di beberapa daerah, latar belakang budaya lingkungan keluarga saya adalah suku bali. namun mama saya bukan berasal dari suku bali melainkan dari suku bugis.

Saya lahir dan besar di Bogor, keluarga saya berasal dari Sumatera dan Jakarta tetapi kamu bukan berasal dari suku Betawi dan Batak melainkan keluarga saya memiliki keturunan Tionghoa

Coba ceritakan dari latar belakang budaya apakah kamu dan keluarga mu?

29 jawaban

Saya punya latar belakang campuran! Mama saya china dan papa saya orang Jawa Timur saya lahir di jakarta utara kelapa gading dan latar belakang saya lebih ke China sih karna nai nai aku tinggal agak dekat sama aku!

mama saya dari keluarga kaili dan papa saya dari keluarga manado, saya lahir di padang dan saya tumbuh besar di palu lalu sma ini saya pindah ke jakarta.

saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta, Keluarga saya dari Pontianak dan Medan, namun keluarga kami berasal dari keturunan chinese juga.

Rally

saya memiliki latar belakang dari sunda dan jawa mama saya jawa papa sunda saya lahir dan besar di jakarta daerah kelapa gading

Mama saya berasal dari semarang dan papa saya berasal dari Jakarta dan memiliki campuran chinese twtapi saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta

Saya berasal dari Indramayu dan saya memiliki latar belakang campuran, namun ayah saya merupakan berdarah campuran Arab dan Sunda. Ibu saya keturunan Chinese Indramayu.

Coba ceritakan dari latar belakang budaya apakah kamu dan keluarga mu?

29 jawaban

Saya lahir ditangerang dan besar dijakarta, keluarga saya asal dari (jkt-tangerang-medan) tapi bukan dari suku betawi dan batak, melainkan keluarga saya memiliki keturunan chinese.

Saya lahir di Jakarta utara daerah kelapa gading, mama Dan papa saya Dari Jakarta tetapi memiliki keturunan chinese 🥳

jawa timur

Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta daerah kelapa gading, papa saya juga dibesarkan di Jakarta dengan keturunan chinese. Ibu saya lahir dan dibesarkan di Manado, dengan campuran chinese.

1. Mama saya lahir di Papua, tepatnya di Serui. Papa saya lahir di Bangka Belitung.
2. Mama saya campuran Keturunan China Tiongkok Khe, Makassar, Manado, Belanda, Kanada, Papua.
3. Papa saya asli Keturunan China Tiongkok Hokkien.
4. Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta.

Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta, papa saya dari Manado, dan mama saya keturunan dari Solo, namun kedua orang tua saya juga keturunan chinese.

Coba ceritakan dari latar belakang budaya apakah kamu dan keluarga mu?

29 jawaban

Besar & tinggal di jakarta, bapak, emak keturunan chinese 🥳👍🥳

Saya memiliki latar belakang dari campuran beberapa budaya, mama saya dari keluarga minangkabau, dan papa saya dari keluarga kalimantan barat yang berasal dari daerah Pontianak. Namun saat ini saya lahir dan besar di jakarta

Saya memiliki latar belakang budaya batak, Bapak saya dari keluarga batak, Mama saya juga dari keluarga batak, Mama dan Bapak saya lahir di Jakarta, Saya juga lahir di Jakarta.

Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta. Ibu saya dari suku Batak dan Ayah saya dari suku Jawa, tetapi mereka besar di Jakarta.

Aku berasal dari keluarga Chinese tapi, kebanyakan keluarga saya lahir di Jakarta  
Mama saya lahir di Jakarta  
Kakek saya lahir di Medan / Manado (lupa)  
Nenek saya lahir di Pontianak  
Sekarang kita semua tinggal di Jakarta

Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta, keluarga dari mama saya dari suku Batak Karo dan keluarga bapak saya dari Jawa

Saya lahir dan besar jakarta utara daerah kelapa gading dan papa saya dari solo.

1. saya memiliki latar belakang campuran beberapa budaya, ibu saya dari sulawesi selatan dan bapak saya berasal dari bali. saya lahir di bali dan di besarkan di beberapa daerah (pindah-pindah)

2. saya lahir di bali dan besar di beberapa daerah, latar belakang budaya lingkungan keluarga saya adalah suku bali. namun mama saya bukan berasal dari suku bali melainkan dari suku bugis.

Saya lahir dan besar di Bogor, keluarga saya berasal dari Sumatera dan Jakarta tetapi kamu bukan berasal dari suku Betawi dan Batak melainkan keluarga saya memiliki keturunan Tionghoa

Saya memiliki latar belakang dari satu budaya, mama saya dengan budaya cina berasal dari Tangerang, serta papa saya dengan budaya cina berasal dari Surabaya. Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta Timur, latar belakang budaya di lingkungan saya adalah budaya cina.

Coba ceritakan dari latar belakang budaya apakah kamu dan keluarga mu?

29 jawaban

Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta, keluarga saya dari Jakarta tetapi kami bukan berasal dari suku Betawi melainkan keluarga saya memiliki keturunan Chinese.

mama saya dari keluarga China, dan papa saya dari keluarga China yang berasal dari Sumatra (Belitung) dan saya lahir di Jakarta dan tumbuh di Jakarta

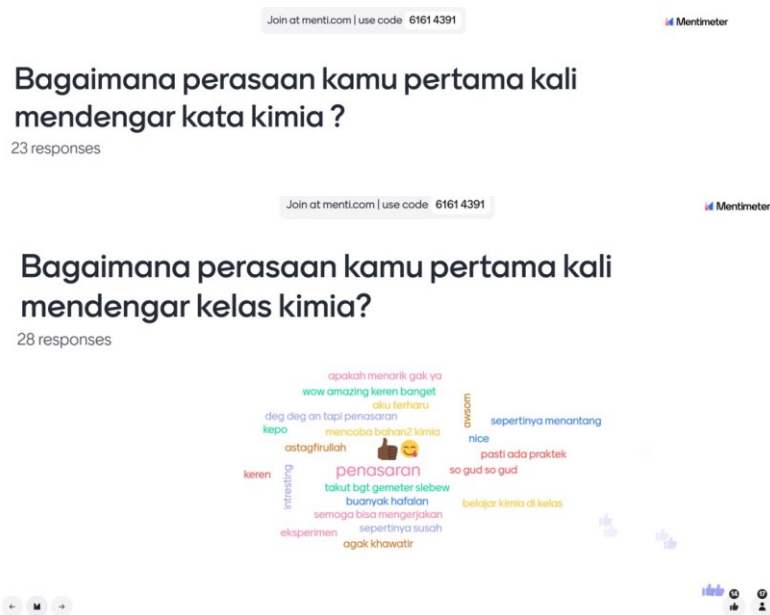
Saya memiliki latar belakang dari campuran beberapa budaya, mama saya dari keluarga Cina lahir di Lampung, dan papa saya dari Surabaya dengan budaya Jawa-Cina. Namun, saat ini saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta.

Saya berasal dari Pontianak

Saya lahir dan besar di Jakarta, keluarga saya juga lahir dan besar di Jakarta tetapi kami bukan berasal dari suku Betawi melainkan keluarga saya memiliki keturunan Tiongkok

Ayah Ibu saya keturunan Chinese yang lahir dan tinggal di Pulau Sumatra, saya lahir di Jakarta. Saya tinggal di lingkungan multibudaya.

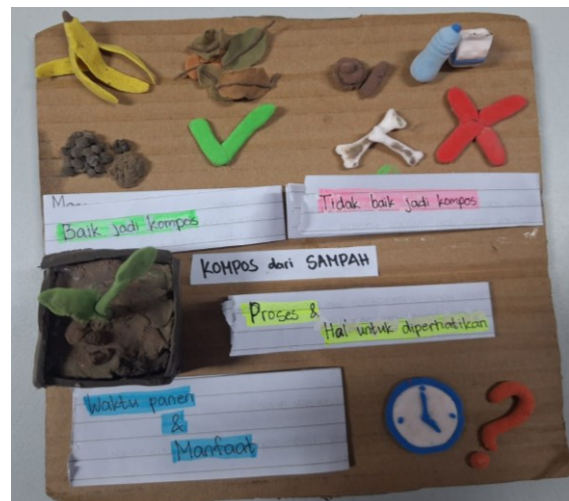
### Appendix 3. Mentimeter Answers



### Appendix 4. Learner's work



Gambar 1. Hasil karya Kelompok 1



Gambar 2. Hasil Karya Kelompok 2

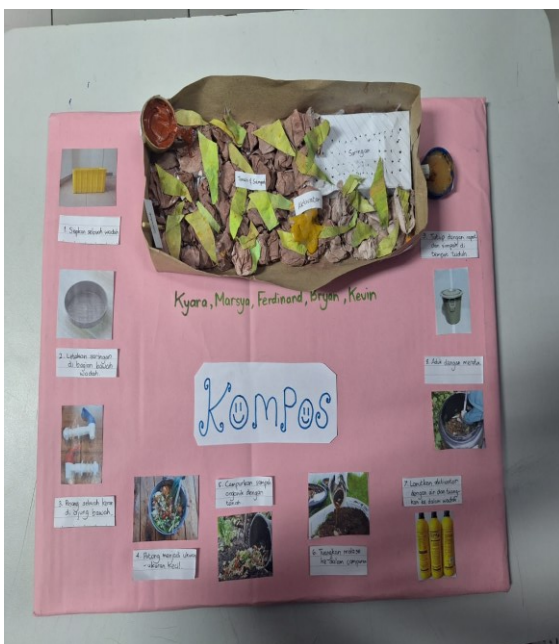




Gambar 3. Hasil Karya Kelompok 3



Gambar 4. Hasil Karya Kelompok 4



Gambar 5. Hasil Karya Kelompok 5

# Navigating Challenges and Innovations: Enhancing the Teaching-Research Nexus in Taiwan Academics

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## ABSTRACT

In the face of declining birth rates and increasing global competition, Taiwan universities are grappling with challenges such as insufficient student enrollment, declining student quality, and academic inflation. The traditional emphasis on research over teaching has exacerbated these issues, leading to student achievement and employability concerns. This study explores the perspectives of Taiwan academics on integrating teaching and research (Teaching-Research Nexus, TRN) and its practical application in enhancing academic productivity and teaching quality. Through in-depth interviews and expert focus groups, the research investigates academics' views on incorporating research into their teaching practices, the methods they use to foster student engagement in research, and the impact of TRN on student learning outcomes. Key findings reveal that effective TRN strategies can significantly enhance students' interest in learning, academic achievement, and research skills. Moreover, the study identifies several barriers to the successful integration of TRN, including the heavy emphasis on research for promotion, limited support for teaching-focused initiatives, and varying expectations across different academic disciplines. The research offers practical recommendations for policymakers and educators to develop robust TRN strategies, fostering a balanced academic environment supporting teaching and research excellence. These insights are crucial for advancing higher education quality and sustaining academic innovation in Taiwan.

**Keywords:** academic inflation, Taiwan, teaching-focused initiatives, teaching-research nexus

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background and Motivation

Higher education plays a pivotal role in cultivating talent, advancing academic research, and serving society, thereby profoundly influencing national development and social progress. In response to these demands, many developed countries have actively pursued higher education reforms aimed at enhancing educational quality and strengthening global competitiveness (Wu, 2011). Under the trend of globalization, Taiwan has also endeavored to improve the quality and quantity of its higher education system. Although the expansion of higher education has seemingly increased access to university education and improved the overall quality of the workforce, it has also led to imbalances in the quality of education offered.

The rapid growth of Taiwan's higher education sector over the past three decades has seen the number of higher education institutions increase from 105 in 1986 to 158 by 2015. This expansion can be divided into four phases: regulation, growth, popularization, and consolidation (Huang, 2017; Lin, 2018). Despite this growth, the declining birth rate and the resulting decrease in student enrollment have posed significant financial challenges for universities. Many institutions are struggling with issues such as insufficient student numbers, difficulties in admissions, declining student quality, and academic inflation (Dai & Lin, 2015; Hong, 2020).

Moreover, the traditional emphasis on research over teaching within Taiwan universities has further exacerbated these challenges, raising concerns about student achievement and employability. This imbalance

underscores the urgent need for strategies that can enhance both teaching quality and student learning outcomes, aligning with societal expectations for teaching professionalism, academic advancement, and student success. This study aims to explore the feasibility and challenges of promoting the Teaching-Research Nexus (TRN) among Taiwan academics, examining how these elements can be effectively integrated to improve educational quality.

## **1.2 Research Objectives and Questions**

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the current state of the Teaching-Research Nexus (TRN) among Taiwan academics and to identify feasible models for integrating teaching and research that are adaptable to the specific context of Taiwan higher education. This study aims to address the following key research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Taiwan academics regarding the integration of teaching and research?
2. What factors influence the success of TRN in Taiwan higher education institutions?
3. What strategies can effectively promote TRN in the context of Taiwan higher education, considering the unique challenges faced by these institutions?

These research questions are designed to uncover both the opportunities and barriers to TRN implementation, providing a comprehensive understanding of how teaching and research can be better integrated in Taiwan universities.

## **2. Literature Review**

The development of higher education in Taiwan is deeply rooted in the nation's educational policies and historical context. To understand the future trajectory of higher education in Taiwan, it is essential to re-examine the roles of academics, their professional development in teaching, and how these factors interplay with the broader educational landscape. This section reviews the evolution of Taiwan's higher education policies, the concept of teaching professionalism, the roles of academics, and the significance of linking teaching and research.

### **2.1 Evolution of Higher Education Policies in Taiwan**

The Ministry of Education in Taiwan has implemented various initiatives to enhance the international competitiveness of Taiwan universities. Since 2005, the "Aim for the Top University Plan" has focused on promoting research, often at the expense of teaching. To counter this imbalance, initiatives such as the "Teaching Excellence Project" and the "Development of Exemplary Technological Universities Plan" were introduced to encourage diversified development among universities. In 2013, the Ministry of Education launched the "Pilot Program for Diversified Academics Promotion" to address the need for multiple pathways for academic promotion. These included research-oriented promotions and those based on teaching achievements and industry-academia collaborations.

In 2017, the Ministry of Education further supported teaching quality improvements by introducing the "Teaching Practice Research Program." Inspired by the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) movement in North America, this program encouraged academics to integrate research into their teaching practices to enhance student learning outcomes. The program's popularity proliferated, with 2,174 applications in its first year, of which 1,034 were approved—a 48% acceptance rate. By 2020, the number of applications had increased to 3,020, with 1,349 approved (Ministry of Education, 2020).

The "Higher Education Sprout Project," launched in 2018, marked a significant shift towards an integrated support system for both higher and technical vocational education in Taiwan. This five-year plan sought to enhance university quality, promote diverse educational development, and ensure equal access to education. One of the key goals of this project was to encourage universities to fulfill their social responsibilities, mainly through the University Social Responsibility (USR) initiative. This initiative emphasizes the importance of local engagement and humanistic care, urging universities to apply their academic resources to address regional needs and contribute to social development.



## 2.2 Teaching Professionalism and the Role of Academics

Academics are central to driving educational reform and institutional progress. Their teaching professionalism directly impacts both their teaching performance and student learning outcomes. In the knowledge society era, knowledge production and dissemination are critical functions of higher education institutions, where research, teaching, service, and administrative duties are interlinked. Research and teaching are the most crucial academic tasks (Arimoto, 2014). Therefore, scholars argue that the professional role of academics should encompass research and teaching functions, with the integration of these two aspects becoming a focal point of higher education development (Shin et al., 2014).

## 2.3 Boyer's Four Types of Scholarship

To bridge the traditional gap between teaching and research, Boyer (1990) redefined academic practice as "scholarship" and proposed a framework that includes four types of scholarship: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Among these, the "scholarship of discovery" aligns most closely with the traditional research concept, focusing on knowledge creation and exploration. The "scholarship of integration" emphasizes synthesizing knowledge across disciplines, facilitating interdisciplinary connections. The "scholarship of application" involves applying knowledge to address broader societal issues, while the "scholarship of teaching" focuses on effective teaching practices and disseminating disciplinary knowledge.

Hutchings and Shulman (1999) later expanded on Boyer's concept, advocating for the inseparability of teaching and learning, leading to the development of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). This approach emphasizes integrating research into teaching practices, encouraging academics to reflect on their teaching and use research to inform and improve their instructional methods.

## 2.4 The Teaching-Research Nexus (TRN)

The globalization of higher education has intensified the demand for high-quality academic practices, with a growing emphasis on the collaboration between teaching and research. Musthafa and Sajila (2014) and Shin, Jung, and Kim (2014) highlight the importance of conceptualizing and organizing the relationship between teaching and research within academic environments, recognizing it as a critical area of focus for higher education institutions globally.

### Types and Models of the Teaching-Research Nexus

Universities are institutions where teaching, research, and student learning converge. As the knowledge society evolves, integrating research and knowledge transfer (teaching) has become a vital mission for higher education institutions. Boyer (1990) argued that both teaching and research are forms of scholarship, where teaching is a thoughtfully planned activity that encourages students to engage with the subjects they study critically. Conversely, research involves applying theory in practice, leading to new insights and perspectives.

Brew and Boud (1995) found that the common thread between teaching and research is learning, as both involve inquiry, investigation, and experimentation. They suggest that teaching should not be seen as separate from research but as activities that coexist and reinforce each other, contributing to knowledge development and understanding (Neumann, 1994; Deakin, 2006).

Griffiths (2004) categorized the TRN into four forms: research-led teaching, research-oriented teaching, research-based teaching, and research-informed teaching. Each form reflects different approaches to integrating research into teaching, ranging from teacher-centered dissemination of research findings to student-centered inquiry and investigation.

1. Jenkins and Healey (2005) further developed these models by combining research, teaching, and learning into a comprehensive framework that considers research content and students' role in learning. This approach encourages academics to adopt student-centered teaching methods, integrating research as a fundamental component of the educational experience. The TRN model is divided into four forms:

1. Research-led teaching
2. Research-oriented teaching
3. Research-based teaching
4. Research-tutored teaching

### Factors Influencing the TRN

The complexity of the TRN varies across different higher education systems. In France, universities focus on education, while specialized institutions handle research. In contrast, German universities integrate teaching, professional training, and research. In the United States, undergraduate education emphasizes teaching, while graduate education combines teaching with research. These differences highlight the diverse approaches to integrating teaching and research across various educational contexts.

Factors influencing the TRN include national policies, institutional goals, disciplinary differences, and individual academics' experiences and training. For instance, countries seeking to enhance their global competitiveness often concentrate research funding on research-intensive universities, leading to a stronger focus on research performance at the expense of teaching quality (Shin, 2013).

Institutional factors such as promotion criteria and performance evaluation systems also play a crucial role in shaping the TRN. Research shows that academic performance assessments often prioritize research output, which can incentivize academics to focus more on research than teaching (Bogt & Scapens, 2012; Gendron, 2008). Additionally, disciplinary differences affect how teaching and research are integrated, with some fields, like the humanities and social sciences, finding it more challenging to establish strong connections between the two due to the individualistic nature of their research practices (Fasli, 2007).

## 3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the feasibility and challenges of promoting the Teaching-Research Nexus (TRN) among Taiwan academics. The qualitative methodology was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of academics' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes, which are crucial for understanding the complex dynamics of integrating teaching and research.

### 3.1 Research Design

#### 1. Participants

- The study included academics from public and private universities, as well as those from research-intensive and teaching-focused institutions. Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure representation from a diverse range of academic disciplines, including the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering.
- A total of 18 academics were interviewed, with additional input from two focus group discussions, each comprising 3-4 participants. This sample size was deemed sufficient to achieve data saturation, where no new themes or insights emerged.

#### 2. Data Collection

- **In-depth Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow 11 participants to share their experiences and thoughts on TRN freely. The interviews focused on key topics, such as the perceived importance of TRN, the challenges in integrating research into teaching, institutional support for TRN, and the impact of TRN on student learning outcomes.
- **Focus Group Discussions:** These discussions were designed to facilitate interaction among participants, enabling them to compare and contrast their experiences. The 2 groups setting encouraged 7 participants to elaborate on their ideas and provided opportunities to identify common challenges and potential solutions.

#### 3. Data Analysis

- The data collected from interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and analyzed using grounded theory, which is a systematic methodology in qualitative research that involves constructing theories through methodical gathering and analysis of data.
- The analysis followed a coding process, starting with open coding to identify initial themes

and concepts, followed by axial coding to explore relationships between these themes, and finally, selective coding to integrate and refine the core categories. This iterative process allowed the researchers to develop a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the feasibility and challenges of TRN.

#### **4. Ethical Considerations**

- Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the participating universities. All participants were informed of the study's purpose, and their consent was obtained before data collection. The confidentiality of participants' identities and responses was maintained throughout the study, and all data were anonymized to protect privacy.

### **3.2 Research Limitations**

The study's qualitative nature, while providing rich insights into the experiences of Taiwan academics, also has certain limitations. The findings are context-specific and may not be generalizable to other higher education systems. Additionally, the sample size, though adequate for qualitative research, limits the ability to draw broader conclusions. Future research could address these limitations by incorporating quantitative methods or expanding the sample size to include a more diverse range of institutions and disciplines.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

This study employs qualitative research methods (in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis) to gather and analyze a wide range of qualitative data. Through coding, translation, induction, and analysis, the research extracts findings that address the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of Taiwan academics regarding the integration of teaching and research?
2. What factors influence the success of TRN in Taiwan higher education institutions?
3. What strategies can effectively promote TRN in the context of Taiwan higher education, considering the unique challenges faced by these institutions?

By examining the responses of academics concerning their teaching and research work, as well as their efforts to promote the integration of teaching and research, this study seeks to understand their views on academic work, the development of teaching professionalism and role identity, the feasibility and influencing factors of integrating teaching and research, and to clarify the types of integration tendencies among academics. The study also analyzes the challenges and feasible strategies for developing teaching-research integration from individual and institutional perspectives.

### **4.1 Challenges in Integrating Teaching and Research:**

#### **1. Balancing Teaching and Research Responsibilities**

One of the most frequently mentioned challenges was the difficulty in balancing teaching and research responsibilities. Academics reported that the demands of research, including securing funding, publishing papers, and attending conferences, often left them with limited time and energy to focus on teaching. This challenge was particularly pronounced for younger faculty members who were under pressure to establish their research credentials for career advancement.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "Whether it is a teaching-oriented or research-oriented university, it all revolves around teaching and research." (Interview N010101)
- "Everything I do is related to research very naturally, so if I had to estimate, it might be 60-40, with 60% research and 40% teaching and service, because honestly, teaching and service are no longer difficult for me." (Interview N030101)
- "When I first started, I spent much time preparing lessons, focusing most of my energy on teaching. Gradually, as teaching became more stable, I began to shift my energy back to research." (Interview S030103)
- "In the past ten years, teaching has taken up about 70%, and research 30%. Although I still publish, I no longer aim for top-tier journals. After two rounds of promotion based on teaching, I know I need to adjust, so now I am balancing it 50-50." (Interview S010101)

- "My primary research is in pure mathematics... Balancing teaching and research felt like being on two parallel tracks, requiring twice the effort to manage both." (Interview S040101)
- "When I first started, the pressure was immense, so the ratio was probably 60% research and 40% teaching. Now, at 60 years old, my mindset has shifted, and it is more like 60% teaching and 40% research." (Interview N010102)

## 2. Institutional Expectations and Promotion Criteria

The study found that institutional expectations and promotion criteria heavily influenced how academics approached the integration of teaching and research. Many participants noted that promotion and tenure decisions were primarily based on research output, which incentivized them to prioritize research over teaching. This focus on research metrics was seen as a significant barrier to developing a strong TRN, as it discouraged academics from investing time and effort into innovative teaching practices.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "Teaching and research at the university, because of promotion requirements... Most of the time, it is still heavily weighted towards research... The biggest pressure for new teachers is promotion because there is still a six-year rule, like at our school, so the pressure is quite high." (Interview S030101)
- "New teachers are mostly assigned tasks, and I later realized that although it might be difficult at first, the efforts invested will have many returns in the future. However, due to promotion pressures, many teachers are unwilling to try new approaches or projects." (Interview S030102)
- "Since we are a private university, like Fu Jen Catholic University, every teacher has a heavy course load. So, for me, the ratio of teaching to research is about half and half. I have a lot, so half of my time is spent teaching, and only the remaining time can be used for research." (Interview S050101)
- "The academic expectations of Chung Yuan Christian University are based on disciplinary strengths, so the expectations for teachers in terms of teaching and research depend on the strengths of their disciplines." (Interview N040101)
- "I just got promoted to associate professor... It is about 60-40, with 60% research and 40% teaching. As I become more familiar with the courses, the teaching weight may decrease, and research might take up more. I think eventually it might be 70-30." (Interview S030104)
- "Our university supports a teaching track for promotion, which motivated me to focus on teaching practice research, leading to an integrated approach where research improves teaching quality." (Interview S040201)

## 3. Lack of Institutional Support

A recurring theme in the interviews was the lack of institutional support for teaching-focused initiatives. Academics reported that while there were resources available for research activities, similar support for teaching was often limited or non-existent. This included a lack of funding for teaching development, inadequate recognition of teaching excellence in performance evaluations, and insufficient opportunities for professional development in pedagogy.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "In the engineering sciences, research is still the primary criterion for promotion... No matter how good your teaching is, if your research output is insufficient, it is not conducive to promotion." (Interview S030105)
- "Schools are very realistic, especially in STEM fields where the expectation is still research-based promotion. Even though the Ministry of Education encourages teaching-based promotion, it's still difficult to achieve, especially in traditional schools." (Interview S010105)
- "I think increasing the number of teaching assistants would be very helpful." (Interview S040103)

## 4.2. Academics' Perceptions of the Teaching-Research Nexus

### 1. Perceived Importance of TRN

The majority of the academics interviewed recognized the importance of integrating teaching and research. They viewed TRN as essential for enhancing student learning outcomes and for fostering a more dynamic and engaging academic environment. Many participants noted that by incorporating research into their teaching practices, they were able to provide students with up-to-date knowledge and practical examples that connected theory to real-world applications.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "I found that bringing my latest research into the classroom is quite effective for both my teaching and research progress." (Interview S030108)
- "Over the past 20 years, I have developed a teaching method that integrates research into the classroom, whether in graduate or undergraduate courses." (Interview N020104)
- "My research foundation informs my teaching, whether through using research findings as teaching materials or developing students' research abilities. This might be due to my doctoral training." (Interview S010202)
- "Teaching needs have inspired various research paths, which has significantly contributed to my development." (Interview N020202)
- "Professional identity involves both teaching and research. When the teaching and research subjects overlap, it is easier to integrate them." (Interview G1010201)
- "If the teaching and research subjects overlap significantly, there are greater opportunities for integration. For example, in my general education course on science communication, I observe how students receive scientific information, which informs my research." (Interview G1010202)
- "The university gives us a heavy teaching load. I feel that teaching, research, and service should be integrated from the start." (Interview S020301)
- "I combine my service, research, and teaching from the beginning. These three stimulate each other in a spiraling upward process." (Interview N020302)
- "Teaching sociology of education and sociology of knowledge while also engaging in research and administrative duties has allowed me to integrate these roles." (Interview G1030301)

### 2. Benefits for Students

Academics highlighted several benefits for students when research is integrated into teaching. These included improved critical thinking skills, greater engagement with the material, and enhanced research skills. Academics also reported that students who were exposed to research in their courses were more likely to pursue further research opportunities, such as undergraduate research projects or graduate studies.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "TRN should be student-centered, considering how research can be useful for teaching and how teaching can support research." (Interview N040301)
- "Some teachers feel that students seem to be getting worse every year, but I see each cohort as a new challenge because, as teachers, we do not choose our students, and students don't choose their teachers either." (Interview S010103)
- "Previously, I did not see the connection, but once I started focusing on student learning outcomes, I began to see how my research could be connected to my teaching." (Interview S020101)
- "Because my research is interdisciplinary, involving IoT and robotics applied to civil engineering, I thought about designing a course that would train my graduate students in the necessary skills." (Interview S030105)
- "As a university teacher, I sometimes worry about my connection to the future, so I encourage students to think about future scenarios, even if I can't answer all their questions." (Interview S010106)

- "I also teach required courses like freshman and sophomore courses, where I try new teaching tools to increase student interest." (Interview S030106)
- "Your research findings will be acknowledged indirectly, but teaching has a direct and lasting impact on students, which is difficult to measure." (Interview N050102)

### 3. Impact on Academic Identity

For many academics, the integration of teaching and research contributed positively to their professional identity. They reported a sense of fulfillment in being able to contribute to both the creation of knowledge (through research) and its dissemination (through teaching). However, some participants expressed concerns that the heavy emphasis on research output for promotion and tenure decisions sometimes overshadowed their teaching efforts, leading to a tension between their dual roles as educators and researchers.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "I have a great passion for teaching, so a few years ago, I decided to explore teaching research, which has become my primary research direction, focusing on the practice of teaching." (Interview S040102)
- "No matter the field, teaching and research cannot be separated." (Interview S010104)
- "I teach consistently, and every year, I try to develop new things to improve or experiment with in my teaching. Research depends on whether I find an interesting topic; if I do, I pursue it, but I do not force myself to produce results." (Interview N050101)
- "Initially, I had research ideas that I incorporated into my courses, turning research findings into teaching content. But now, I also take feedback from students and others in my field to suggest new research topics." (Interview N040103)
- "In the engineering sciences, research is still the primary criterion for promotion... No matter how good your teaching is, if your research output is insufficient, it is not conducive to promotion." (Interview S030105)
- "Some teachers feel that students seem to be getting worse every year, but I see each cohort as a new challenge because, as teachers, we do not choose our students, and students don't choose their teachers either." (Interview S010103)
- "Most universities don't value teaching... The real challenge is teaching, which is often overshadowed in universities." (Interview N020101)
- "Earlier, teaching took up more of my time, but now research is more dominant... If we include the impact of USR (University Social Responsibility) programs, which are time-consuming, teaching now takes up more." (Interview N040102)

## 4.3 Institutional Factors Influencing TRN

### 1. Variation Across Disciplines

The study revealed significant variation in how TRN was implemented across different academic disciplines. Academics in the natural sciences and engineering reported a stronger alignment between their research and teaching, as these fields often involved hands-on experimentation and practical applications that could be directly incorporated into the classroom. In contrast, academics in the humanities and social sciences found it more challenging to integrate their research into teaching, particularly when their research was more theoretical or abstract.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "I used to work in the solar and green energy industry, and I bring that teaching into my graduate courses and projects." (Interview S010107)
- "The combination of teaching and research depends on the subject. It's not necessarily applicable to every course, but elements of research can be incorporated into applications, especially in advanced courses." (Interview S030202)
- "In social sciences, the variables are not as empirically based as in natural sciences, so TRN models like Jenkins & Healey's provide a framework for thinking." (Interview N010202)
- "The TRN framework should be applied flexibly based on the content and characteristics of the course." (Interview N050201)

- "In Taiwan, we use different strategies for different subjects, and the TRN models are applied in a cyclical manner rather than strictly adhering to one model." (Interview N040201)
- "Our university supports a teaching track for promotion, which motivated me to focus on teaching practice research, leading to an integrated approach where research improves teaching quality." (Interview S040201)

## 2. The Role of Leadership

Institutional leadership was identified as a critical factor in the success of TRN initiatives. Participants noted that when university leaders actively supported the integration of teaching and research, through policies, funding, and recognition, it created a more conducive environment for TRN. Conversely, a lack of leadership commitment to TRN was seen as a major obstacle, resulting in fragmented efforts and limited impact.

Excerpts from interviews:

- "The Teaching and Learning Center can play a crucial role in supporting Academics." (Interview N030104)
- "The TRN requires a team approach, rather than separating teaching and research." (Interview S020103)
- "Financial incentives for both teaching and research are essential." (Interview S030109)
- "Creating a supportive institutional environment is crucial for recognizing the value of teaching." (Interview S020104)
- "Academics should have the opportunity to pursue promotion through diverse criteria, including teaching practice." (Interview S040105)
- "The school could reduce teaching loads to improve teaching quality." (Interview S030110)
- "Setting up dedicated units to promote the integration of teaching and research would encourage innovation." (Interview S040106)
- "We have a pilot program for teaching practice research, where academics can receive feedback and refine their ideas before applying for funding." (Interview S010301)
- "The Teaching Development Center plans to create a database of published articles and measurement tools to help academics with their research." (Interview N010302)

These discussions highlight the importance of promoting TRN in higher education and recognizing various challenges and opportunities of university academics. The study suggests that a blended approach, institutional support, and fostering academic development communities can enhance the integration of teaching and research, ultimately improving the quality of education and research in Taiwan.

## 5. Research Conclusion

This study investigates Taiwan academics' views on the current state of academic recognition, professional development, and role identity in teaching, as well as the feasibility and influencing factors of the TRN. The study also examines the support mechanisms and management structures within universities and attempts to identify the connections that Taiwan academics tend to favor. Through qualitative interviews, the study explores the perspectives of academics from different backgrounds (such as public and private universities, research-focused and teaching-oriented institutions, and social and natural sciences) on academic recognition, teaching professionalism, career identity, teaching commitment, and participation in academic activities (teaching and research). The study also looks into their support for and practice of TRN, the challenges faced, and the strategies required for effective implementation. Based on these findings, the study offers feasible approaches that integrate theory and practice to promote the sustainable development of teaching and research connections in universities, thereby enhancing teaching and learning quality.

### 5.1 Promoting a Systematic Approach Integrating Teaching, Research, and Service in Taiwan Higher Education to Enhance Academics' Professional Practice

Time poverty is prevalent in Taiwan society, where fragmented personal time leads to diminished teaching, research, and service quality. Teachers' tasks are divided into fragmented segments but can only achieve

partial goals within limited time frames. By deepening the concept of TRN, whether through "research-based teaching," "teaching-driven research," or "service-oriented research-teaching integration," teaching, research, and service can be seen as mutually reinforcing components. The study found that academics involved in University Social Responsibility (USR) initiatives are exemplars of TRN in practice. They engage in classroom teaching, guide students in problem-solving, and implement service-based social responsibility projects in the community, integrating these activities into their research plans. This approach exemplifies TRN, demonstrating its practical steps through USR initiatives.

Many Taiwan academics agree that teaching, research, and service are fundamental responsibilities of their profession. However, the actual weight assigned to these activities in their work often depends on the institution's emphasis on teaching and research, promotion pressures, teaching loads, and the nature of their academic fields. By sharing experiences by senior academics, the professional responsibilities of teaching, research, and service can be viewed as interconnected and mutually supportive rather than separate and independent functions. This approach can enhance teachers' teaching capacity and improve student learning quality. Encouraging academics to integrate service-learning elements into their courses, guiding students to explore and address real-world issues with research-oriented attitudes and skills, promotes the comprehensive development of teaching, research, and service.

## **5.2 Most Academics Agree That Teaching Should Be Centered on Student Learning, and They Adapt TRN Strategies to Meet Different Disciplinary Teaching Needs to Enhance Student Learning**

University courses vary in disciplinary focus, knowledge content, and learning methods. The TRN models proposed in this study are inherently based on integrating research content or methods into teaching strategies to promote student learning and achieve higher education goals, including knowledge construction, problem awareness, research methodology acquisition, and research interest stimulation.

The study found that while Taiwan academics may be unfamiliar with the theoretical model of TRN, their intrinsic motivation for teaching professionalism naturally leads them to integrate teaching and research based on the characteristics of their subjects. Examples include sharing their research content in the classroom, guiding students in research methods, or providing research-related counseling. However, not all disciplines and courses adopt the TRN model. This study introduces Jenkins & Healey's TRN Model, which includes four modes: Research-led, Research-oriented, Research-tutored, and Research-based. The study found that academics can employ two approaches in teaching: (1) **Blended TRN**: Organically combine teaching and research connection models based on disciplinary nature and learning stages, implementing them alternately in different courses; (2) **Cyclic TRN**: Guide students through research stages by starting with Research-led Teaching to introduce the latest research content, using Research-based and Research-tutored Teaching in the middle stages for method instruction and counseling, and concluding with Research-oriented Teaching to translate research results into knowledge. Whether centered on the teacher's transmission of research findings and methods or the student's active participation in research projects, TRN strategies can promote student learning progress and quality improvement through student-centered teaching.

Moreover, the benefits of connecting teaching and research can also positively affect academics. When academics are heavily engaged in research, they must assess whether they have sufficient research capacity. Involving students in research topics, guiding their reasoning, or integrating sociological inquiry into education can provide real research experiences. As academics work to connect teaching and research, they can continually extend their research capabilities, generating broader research topics.

## **5.3 Establishing Cross-Disciplinary Collaborative Communities Is Beneficial for Teaching Innovation and Research**

The study reveals that establishing cross-disciplinary and cross-domain collaborative communities is significant for teaching improvement and research innovation. Such collaborations break down traditional academic boundaries, facilitating knowledge exchange and integration within the educational field. (1) **Knowledge Integration**: Collaborative communities combine expertise from different disciplines and



domains, creating a rich learning environment that helps academics understand diverse issues, leading to new research perspectives. (2) **Innovative Thinking:** The combination of different disciplines introduces diverse ways of thinking and problem-solving. In collaborative communities, academics can gain new insights from other fields, fostering the development of innovative teaching methods and research designs. (3) **Achieving Teaching Goals:** Cross-disciplinary collaborative communities provide a platform for achieving teaching objectives. Through exchanges with professionals from other fields, academics can better understand interdisciplinary connections, enabling them to design more in-depth and broader teaching content. (4) **Collaboration and Resource Sharing:** Forming collaborative communities promotes cooperation among professionals across different fields, fostering emotional connections among members. Resource sharing can also accelerate research processes and improve research efficiency.

Promoting collaboration and communication among academics across disciplines and fields encourages cross-disciplinary research projects and team teaching. This approach offers students multidimensional learning experiences and enhances the integration of research and teaching. Building partnerships within these communities support academics' career development, offering collaborative platforms for research innovation through discussions and cross-domain dialogues.

#### **5.4 Shaping an "Inquiry and Practice" Culture on University Campuses Through USR to Organically Connect Teaching and Research**

Fostering a campus culture that values and promotes inquiry-based learning and research-oriented teaching, from classrooms to playgrounds, campuses to communities, and schools to industries, can shape a culture of inquiry (research) and practice. Encouraging academics to connect teaching and research, continuously seeking professional development opportunities, and supporting the implementation of innovative teaching methods aligned with research interests are crucial. Taiwan's educational policies emphasize USR, providing a platform where "service" organically links "teaching" and "research." Using "social service" as a course objective, academics can engage in deep understanding through "teaching," exploring and addressing issues within communities, industries, or service recipients. This exploration generates problem awareness, leading to "research" activities. Through literature reviews and brainstorming, strategies for solving or improving issues are developed and implemented in practice, integrating service, teaching, and research. USR offers a practical field for implementing the TRN. Academics participating in USR projects can position themselves as contributors to societal service. They participate in an integrated process of inquiry, practice, reflection, action, and synthesis, with outcomes that contribute to teaching practice research. These outcomes can be published in journals established by relevant authorities. From the initial problem conception to the final academic output, a clear career path is constructed, encouraging academics to engage in TRN actively, promoting teaching and research integration.

#### **5.5 The Relevance Between Teaching and Research Subjects Reflects the Essence of TRN**

The study indicates a significant connection between teaching and research subjects, where the level of this connection reflects the essence of TRN: "continually improving teaching practice through research." Teaching subjects refer to the students or learner groups that educators instruct, whose needs, characteristics, and learning environments directly influence teaching practices. By profoundly understanding these subjects, educators can adjust teaching strategies, select appropriate teaching materials, and design assessments that meet student needs.

Simultaneously, research subjects focus on academic targets, including teaching methods, curriculum design, and learning outcomes. Through in-depth research, academics can discover effective teaching methods, identify course designs that meet student needs, and improve learning experiences.

The interaction between these two aspects allows educators to generate research questions based on observations, reflections, and understanding of teaching subjects, leading to corresponding academic research. Conversely, the knowledge and insights gained from research subjects can be directly applied to teaching practices, achieving continuous improvement in teaching. This interactive relationship enhances teaching effectiveness and aligns with the core philosophy of TRN, where teaching and research are

complementary and mutually reinforcing. This responsive connection is critical to creating more valuable educational experiences.

## **6. Recommendations and Limitations**

The study results suggest that implementing TRN is feasible across various fields within Taiwan universities, with its success linked to the professional development of academics. How academics perceive the importance of teaching and research is crucial for advancing TRN. In the long run, for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) to be intensely promoted within Taiwan universities, teaching development centers and their members must transform and upgrade, serving as connectors among academics, departments, and institutions. Additionally, the future of higher education in Taiwan requires concerted efforts across all levels, from individual academics to departments, universities, and the Ministry of Education, to build consensus on future education's direction and work progressively towards goals that maximize resource integration and synergistic effects.

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are made for policy formulation by the Ministry of Education, institutional frameworks, administrative leadership and management, and individual academics, aiming to enhance the quality of higher education in Taiwan.

### **6.1 Recommendations**

#### **1. For Policy Formulation by the Ministry of Education**

##### **(1) Establish Mechanisms to Encourage TRN Among Academics**

Implement mechanisms that encourage academics to engage in TRN, such as establishing clear promotion pathways for teaching, defining corresponding indicators for teaching promotions, and constructing teaching excellence reward systems. Support mechanisms should include providing collaborative platforms, teaching resources, and guidance from institutional frameworks. Existing higher education policies, such as the Higher Education Sprout Project and the Teaching Practice Research Program, should emphasize TRN as a core objective, aiming to improve teaching quality, promote deep learning, and foster autonomous professional growth. This goal can be achieved through funding, prioritizing reviews, and other supportive measures.

##### **(2) Integrate TRN into University Social Responsibility (USR) Frameworks**

The study recommends strengthening the connection between teaching, research, and service within the USR (General Education) policy. USR should be viewed as a platform for fostering deep learning and research-oriented thinking, not just as a venue for knowledge dissemination but also as a field for academics' autonomous professional development and deep learning, integrating teaching, research, and service. Additionally, the study suggests establishing dedicated project funding within USR plans to encourage academics to propose projects that integrate TRN concepts. Through incentive mechanisms and funding, TRN practices can be promoted. Furthermore, it is recommended that indicators for TRN-related teaching practice research projects be explicitly included in USR evaluation criteria to promote deep student learning and autonomous professional growth among academics.

##### **(3) Establish Support Mechanisms for Autonomous Professional Growth of Academics**

The Ministry of Education can formulate policies that encourage universities to establish comprehensive mechanisms for the autonomous professional growth of academics. This could be linked with participation in and promotion of the Teaching Practice Research Program, including offering relevant academic training, teaching resources, and reward systems to stimulate academics' motivation for autonomous learning and support their professional growth to enhance teaching quality.

## **2. For Institutional Frameworks**

### **(1) Establish Incentive Mechanisms to Encourage TRN.**

Institutions should establish precise incentive mechanisms to encourage teaching innovation, such as offering substantial rewards for teaching excellence linked with TRN and supporting related projects, such as the Teaching Practice Research Program, to encourage academics to connect teaching with research.

### **(2) Shape an Inquiry-Oriented Campus Culture Through TRN**

- Promote problem-based learning: Encourage academics to adopt problem-based teaching methods, guiding students to actively ask questions, explore knowledge, and develop inquiry and problem-solving skills.
- Encourage student engagement in inquiry-based activities: Create support mechanisms for student inquiry, such as providing teaching assistant support, encouraging participation in inquiry-based activities, and developing students' research skills.
- Promote cross-disciplinary collaboration: Create platforms encouraging collaboration across disciplines, such as joint research projects, academic activities, and workshops. Cross-disciplinary collaboration fosters a rich and diverse academic atmosphere, promoting knowledge exchange and integration.

### **(3) Emphasize the Academic Status of Teaching and Learning**

- Establish clear promotion pathways for teaching: By establishing promotion mechanisms based on teaching, institutions can emphasize the importance of teaching professionalism and the academic status of teaching and learning, motivating academics to engage in professional development and continuously refine their teaching methods.
- Support TRN-related projects (including the Teaching Practice Research Program): Institutions should provide resources to encourage and support academics participating in TRN-related projects, including offering project funding, organizing project proposal workshops, and providing collaborative teaching assistance.
- Promote the integration of teaching and research: Create an environment that facilitates the integration of teaching and academic work, allowing academics to apply research findings to teaching practice freely while being inspired by teaching to conduct more in-depth research, achieving a win-win situation.
- Enhance the role of Teaching Development Centers: Position Teaching Development Centers as hubs for supporting teaching and professional development and as key mediators for promoting TRN. Their responsibilities include providing academic training and workshops to strengthen teaching observation and skills, supporting curriculum design and assessment, assisting academics in refining teaching content and methods, promoting the use of technology in teaching, and offering training workshops. Additionally, the centers should serve as platforms for cross-disciplinary collaboration and provide opportunities for cross-departmental teaching resource sharing and collaboration.

## **3. For Leadership and Administrative Management**

### **(1) Recognize the Importance of TRN and Provide Sufficient Resources, Incentives, and Support**

School leaders and administrators should recognize the importance of TRN, provide sufficient resources, incentives, and support, and offer diverse opportunities for professional development, such as cross-disciplinary training and industry-academia collaboration, enabling academics to achieve TRN goals.

### **(2) Develop Clear Strategies for Integrating Teaching and Research**

The leadership should collaborate to develop strategies that clearly define the direction for integrating teaching and research, incorporating them into the institution's development plans and evaluation mechanisms.

#### 4. For Individual Academics

##### (1) Encourage Self-Development and Professional Growth:

Academics should select suitable, diverse, cross-domain learning enhancement courses or workshops based on professional development needs. Encouragement, rather than mandates, should be provided, allowing experienced research academics in various fields to share and exchange knowledge, helping academics navigate the balance between teaching and research effectively. Resources should be allocated to initiatives that promote TRN, including reduced teaching hours, provision of experimental facilities, and financial support for developing TRN-related materials and tools to encourage active participation in TRN.

##### (2) Encourage the Formation of Professional Communities for TRN

Academics can form professional communities focused on TRN to discuss and share experiences, promoting mutual learning and collaboration.

#### 6.2 Research Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study contributes to the literature on TRN by emphasizing Taiwan academics' perceptions, implementation status, influencing factors, and feasible models for promoting TRN. The findings suggest that TRN is both feasible and necessary for enhancing the quality of higher education, and universities should prioritize the development of TRN while providing necessary support to academics. The strategies identified in this study can serve as a reference for sustainable quality improvement and policy-making in Taiwan and neighboring regions implementing TRN.

However, certain limitations need to be considered. First, the sample size limits the generalizability of the study's findings. Second, this study relied solely on in-depth interviews, focus groups and field surveys; future research could expand data collection through Quantitative Questionnaire to provide a more comprehensive analysis. Lastly, the study only focused on the perspectives of academics, excluding students or other stakeholders. Future research could address these limitations by conducting larger-scale studies and including the perspectives of different stakeholders in higher education.

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# A Close Reading Analysis of the Technical and Narrative Elements of Korean Drama: A Basis for Developing Instructional Materials in Communication

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## ABSTRACT

Anchored on John Fiske's Codes of TV Production, Stuart Hall's Encoding and Decoding Model, and Jacques Lacan's Psychoanalytic Theory, the study analyzed Extraordinary Attorney Woo, a high rated Korean drama text on Netflix based on its technical and narrative elements as well as meanings and contexts through close reading. Extraordinary Attorney Woo as a textual medium, is theorized as a complete text, a conduit and a social voice. It is a complete text because it was able to successfully combine different elements to produce a unified, coherent, and meaningful discourse. It is a social voice because it echoed the sentiments of the marginalized. And it is a conduit of the government and the business sector because it was able to weave tourism-related and product placement information seamlessly into the drama. It also showcased high caliber execution in terms of its production value as evidence by its budget and technical prowess. Korean drama displayed creative domination which could be traced to the competence of the production crew in transforming the screenplay into a visual masterpiece. Cinematography, directing, editing, lighting, production design, graphics design, and audio design are constructed in a production language which conveys meaning when combined and synergized with the narrative elements. TV drama is a potent instructional material for Communication students because it is a rich source of information applicable to TV Production, Scriptwriting, and Cross Cultural communication. The multimedia principle of Mayer was the framework utilized to create the sample modules anchored on the results of the textual analysis.

**Keywords:** Korean drama, Close reading analysis, Narrative elements, Technical Elements, instructional material

## Introduction

TV dramas are a staple of television programming. These texts are rich sources of narratives that highlight various themes, values, ideologies, and social issues. The text captures the audience's attention because it is both familiar and new; hence, they tend to continue consuming the content, thus being exposed to various meaningful interactions and contexts throughout the process.

Several reception studies were conducted during the 2000s in order to explore the reasons for the popularity and consumption of Korean dramas. Iwabuchi (2008), Kim (2013), Lee (2010), and Ju (2020) concluded that "Asian fans enjoyed a cultural affinity with Kdramas by identifying with Korean ways of life, values, physical appearance, and love relationships" (Ju, 2020). In the study of Espiritu (2011) on Filipino women's reception of TV dramas, "the young Filipino women expressed cultural affinity with the culture, storylines, values, and environment in Korean and other Asian television dramas". Moreover, in the study of Igno and Cenidoza (2016), Korean dramas elicited so much appeal among Filipino people because of "good-looking actors and actresses and the drama storyline." These reasons are on the surface level. But looking at the reasons in depth, "Filipinos have a sense of identification with Korea" (Ibid.). Both countries Both countries experienced colonialism, shared the same values, put a high premium on close family ties, and are expressive and romantic (Ibid.)

Netflix's VP for Content (Korea, Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand), summarized the global appeal of Kdramas as "the diverse stories, production quality, and relatability across all genres". These assumptions were supported by Kim (2021), who said Kdramas have "high production value, intense and

often engrossing storylines, quality acting, and bold and skillful storytelling that tackles societal issues, personal struggles, and universal themes such as family, friendship, and love" Looking at these reasons, the common denominators of the phenomenal appeal of Kdramas are their stories and production quality.

The meanings which emerged during the textual analysis could be a potent source for the development of an instructional material. Hobbs (2009) highlighted that "television dramas are increasingly recognized for their potential as instructional materials in the field of Media and Communication. They can facilitate deeper engagement with content due to their narrative structures, which often address complex social, ethical, and cultural issues." Furthermore, the immersive quality of a TV drama "allows students to analyze character development, plot progression, and thematic elements, enhancing their understanding of media production and storytelling" (Teo, 2023).

Sabilah (2016), posited that integrating a TV drama in the curriculum promotes intercultural awareness. Furthermore, through exposure to diverse narratives and characters, students gain insights into different cultures and social perspectives, fostering empathy and understanding (Ibid).

In terms of the technical aspects of the TV drama, it is an essential resource in understanding the foundation of visual communication in the medium (Wang, 2019). It could also contribute immensely to the knowledge of students in the evolving and ever dynamic media landscape.

It is interesting to investigate how Korean drama texts are constructed in terms of their technical and narrative elements and, at the same time, analyze the meanings and contexts that are embedded in the narrative using close reading or close textual analysis. Furthermore, the patterns based on the interpretation will illustrate how actions in communicating dramas are shaped and how could this be a good source of instructional material in the classroom.

## Methodology

The research design of this dissertation is qualitative. Creswell (2013) defined Qualitative research as research that begins with "assumptions and the use of interpretive and theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or group ascribe to social or human problem.

This study used the social constructivism framework as a guide. This interpretive framework's ontological philosophical assumption speaks of "multiple realities as being constructed through lived experiences and interactions with others." Its epistemological assumption posits that "reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched" (Ibid.). It uses "inductive emergent ideas", which are obtained from various methods such as interviewing, observing, and analyzing text. In this research, multiple realities can be obtained through the interaction of the researcher and the texts.

Close reading was employed to analyze the Kdrama texts in order to extract the socially shared meanings. Close reading is defined as "a mindful, disciplined reading of an object with a view to a deeper understanding of its meaning" (Brummet, 2019). In this kind of approach, the "texts or messages" were closely read. The texts read in this research was Extraordinary Attorney Woo (Yoon In Sik, South Korea, 2022). The text was chosen because during the time of the data gathering it was on top of Netflix's most watched dramas.

Extraordinary Attorney Woo was examined based on its narrative elements. The text was analyzed based on their contexts and actions, which contributed to meaning making. By doing so, the goal of "communicating the insights about the meaning of the text will be achieved". Aside from close reading, the lens of the political economy of communication was used to explain the context behind the meaning-making of the sampled text.

Each episode in the drama was examined and underwent a close reading. The data collection method commenced in January 2023 and ended in April 2023. Extraordinary Attorney Woo's 16 episodes on Netflix were viewed first for the initial reading. Data collection began with episode 1, and during the viewing process, initial observations were noted on the matrix prepared. The 16 episodes were reviewed again for the clarification of the findings. No limits were imposed on the review of the dramas; the episodes



were watched repeatedly to double-check interpretations and notes. Furthermore, written literature and documents were consulted to support the initial results.

After the data collection, the data were analyzed and interpreted from May 2023 to June 2023. The notes and observations underwent thematic analysis in order to identify and interpret the themes that emerged during the analysis. The themes that emerged during the analysis were placed in different columns of the matrix created. The notes and observations were then categorized according to the different themes in the matrix. The final results of the study were used as topics and data in the proposed instructional material for Media and Communication students.

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

This study utilized interpretive, cultural, and critical lenses. In the interpretive realm, truth is theorized to be socially constructed through communication. It means that it is largely subjective. Interpretive scholars focus on conscious choices made by individuals.

The interpretive approach, according to Griffin (2019), is "a linguistic work of assigning meaning or value to communicative texts; it also assumes that multiple meanings or truths are possible." Polysemy exists because "viewers interpret their own experiences, lifestyles, values, and other cultural practices into their interpretation" (O'Donnell, 2017). In this sense, "qualitative research is interpretive because it aims to produce and create meanings out of the data collected based on the researcher's understanding" (Abila and Fernandez, 2020).

This research's theoretical underpinning is largely hinged on John Fiske's Codes of TV Production, Stuart Hall's Encoding and Decoding Mode, and Jacques Lacan's Psychoanalytic Theory.

The concept of code in television "refers to a range of audio-visual systems that have the capability to construct meaning" (O'Donnell, 2017). In other words, a code is a system of symbols that could communicate meaning. Television, as a channel, is filled with meanings. For Fiske, TV is the "bearer, provoker, and circulator of meanings and pleasure" (Ibid.). Fiske categorized these codes into three (3). These are reality, representation, and ideology.

Hall introduced a four-stage theory of communication. These are production, circulation, use (distribution or consumption), and reproduction (Co, 2015). These stages are independent or autonomous of each other. Autonomous, according to Hall, means that "the coding of the message does control its reception but not transparently; each stage has its own determining limits and possibilities" ("Stuart Hall Encoding Decoding,")

Stuart Hall is credited for his perspectives and theories on the reception of messages by their audiences. The encoding and decoding model was created as a form of critique to the earlier schools of behaviorism and positivism, which espoused the idea that if the audience cannot decipher or decode the message, there is a failure of communication.

French Psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan was always mentioned in the accounts of Marxist Louis Althusser. Hence, Lacan inspired the first wave of psychoanalytic film theorists' Christian Metz, Jean Louis Baudry, and Laura Mulvey. The first wave focused on "formal critique of cinema's dissemination of ideology and especially the role of cinematic apparatus in the process" (McGowan, 2011).

Lacan's contribution to psychoanalytic film theory is the concept of the "mirror stage," which is relevant to this study. In cinematic discourse, the camera serves as the eye of the viewer and is hidden from the spectator. Once the presence of the camera is made known to the spectator, he loses his power and instead becomes a part of the cinematic event. The spectator now has a sense of awareness that the "film is a product and not simply reality" (Ibid.). This is the reason why there is film editing in order to show the viewers the "supposed" reality. To relate Lacan's concept to this study, TV dramas offer viewers different ideologies, and they want the viewer to accept these ideologies while hiding their real purpose. The viewer

thinks that he is part of the creative process when, in fact, he is not. Hence, to avoid being subjugated by the process, there is a need to unearth the meanings that are hidden. By doing so, power is regained because of this awareness.

The frameworks discussed above were used in the textual analysis. The results of the analysis were then used to craft a module for Communication and Media related courses especially in TV Production, Scriptwriting, and Communication and Society. The development of the module was anchored to Mayer's Multimedia Principle. The principle stipulates that words and images are powerful tandem. It helps the brain understand and remember things easier. If two are combined it could facilitate engagement, understanding, and memory. In crafting the modules, the 3's were used. These are engage, explain, and evaluate.

## Results and Discussion

### Extraordinary Attorney Woo

#### Plot

Brilliant Attorney Woo Young-woo tackles challenges in the courtroom and beyond as a newbie at a top law firm and a woman on the autism spectrum (*Netflix.com*).

The narrative of Extraordinary Attorney Woo is theorized as Korean Fusion because it merged the familiar Korean Drama Elements with other narrative features which emerged during the data analysis. The drama retained its tested-and-proven formula in storytelling and added other components to increase audience appeal.

Below is **Table.1** which shows the Korean Drama Narrative Main theme and sub themes.

Table 1: Korean Drama Narrative Main Theme and Sub-theme

Korean Drama Main Theme	Sub themes
Korean Fusion: Narrative	Metamorphosis of the text
	Classic Kdrama Elements
	Knowledge Sharing Vehicle
	Popular Culture
	Multi-faceted Characters
	Strong Plot

The narrative of Korean drama successfully blended tried and tested elements and integrated it to novel treatments which helped developed the meaning.

There were several literary devices used such as metaphor, foreshadowing, parallelism, stereotype, and symbolisms. This enabled the reader to see that there were meanings embedded in the visuals, dialogues, and actions in the drama series. The classic Kdrama elements comprised most of the text. Research showed that Korean drama text was formulaic. In the case of Extraordinary Attorney Woo, it shed light on the many issues that mattered to Koreans, tried out new concepts, introduced culture, inculcated values, injected laughter and romance, and featured tourism. In the discussion of the different issues, the text challenged the status quo and served as the social voice of the minorities. It also presented the business side of Kdrama through product placement.

These elements were familiar to audiences and that was what made them go back and consume more Kdramas. The text was rich and it presented audience with various information that entertained and triggered their critical thinking skills.

Korean drama text is a vehicle for knowledge sharing and awareness. In the case of Extraordinary Attorney Woo, it presented many ideas, which ranged from legal, medical, science, computer science and even to the mundane, such as tips. It cultivated knowledge to its viewers through education, which led the viewers to learn and apply it to their day-to-day lives. Kdrama was not only a text for entertainment but it was also a tool to propagate knowledge.

Popular Culture was also integrated into the narrative through inclusion of Western figures and concepts in the dialogues, introducing expressions and contemporary terms. Extraordinary Attorney Woo was an Asian text married to Western concepts.

The strength of Korean dramas was on their multi-faceted characters and strong plot. The characters were not superficial. They have depth. They have clear internal and external conflicts. The character transformation was evident and characters were relatable.

Even with a simple plot, Extraordinary Attorney Woo was able to capture the audience's hearts because of the creators' ability of to integrate plot seamlessly into the ongoing plot points. The narrative structure was flexible. For every episode, there was a theme that bound the story and kept it unified. It flowed from the past and went across the present and traversed to reach the future.

All in all, the Korean drama Extraordinary Attorney Woo was meaningful text which did not only entertain but also triggered the audience to think, feel, and be critical.

The Korean drama will not be complete without the production value or the technical elements which makes the Korean drama , a TV drama.

Below is **Table.2** which shows the Korean drama Technical Elements Main theme and Sub themes.

Table 2: Korean Drama Technical Elements Main theme and Sub themes

Korean Drama Main Theme	Sub themes
Cinematography: Korean Eye	Dynamic Shots
	Innovative Style
	Creative Combination of shots, angles, and principles of composition
	Meaningful visuals
	Use of Speed of motion
Directing: Korean Vision	Visual Storytelling
	Realistic Style
	Explore Creative Approaches
Editing: Korean Connect	Meaningful use of Colors
	“Common Join” Utilization
Production Design: Korean Look	Apparent color scheme
	Alignment of character and design
	Consistent Use of the Over-all Production Design Theme
Lighting: Korean Mood	Communicates the scene's mood.
	Variety Light Sources
	Mixture of Range of Colors
	Strong Visual Support

Korean Drama Main Theme	Sub themes
Graphics Design: Korean Imagination	Animated Graphics
	Functional Graphic Design
	Visual Effects Integration
Audio: Korean Sound	Sets the Mood
	Intensifies Action
	Stimulates Reality
	Superior Sound Quality
	Use of Original Soundtrack

In terms of cinematography, Extraordinary Attorney Woo showcased the Korean standard of cinematography - quick shift of shots, five to six angles in one scene, consistent use of camera movements, and superior creative visualization. The cinematography is always in constant motion even if the character is at rest likewise the visuals are meaningful to the scene.

The Koreans are also innovative, in this context, means the creativity of the director of photography to include shots which look special or extraordinary. The director does not employ the usual MS, CU, or FS but rather gives a fresh approach to the scene.

Korean drama prides itself on its cinematography and is considered as a standard in various productions. In Extraordinary Attorney Woo, the Korean eye was flawless. It was able to achieve a creative combination of different shots, angles, and principles of composition.

Meaningful visuals refer to how the mise-en-scene creates meaning. Mis-en- scene is a French term which means “putting into the scene...it includes those aspects of film that overlap with the art of the theatre: setting, lighting, costume and make-up, and staging and performance” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013). In the drama, a meaningful visual was shown in different ways - the position of the actors, the objects, and the kind of shots used in a scene.

Slow motion and time lapse are very common terminologies production people always utter. Oftentimes, the manipulation of the speed of motion was attributed to the editor but it will actually “depend on a photographic power unique to cinema which is control over the speed of movement seen on the screen” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). Aside from slow motion, time lapse was also used. Time lapse is a type of speed of motion that “permits viewers to see the sun set in seconds or a flower sprout, bud, and bloom in a minute” (Ibid).

The directing of Extraordinary Atty. Woo is theorized as Skillful Visual Storytelling: Korean Vision. Korean Vision is the concept formed to describe the kind of directing of Kdrama as reflected in Extraordinary Attorney Woo. It is termed Korean Vision because it is the director that steers the fleet to achieve the objectives set in terms of narrative, cinematography, lighting, production design, casting, and a lot more.

In the drama, the director demonstrated his creative vision through visual storytelling. In the process of commutation, “you take what you see...ilipat ang reality sa something na hindi totoo (transfer reality to fiction)” (Condez, 2023). He added that in films “seeing is better than imagined”. Hence, the director needs to showcase his vision visually. Using the camera as a tool, “the director breaks down the scene into an interrelationship of dramatic perspectives in the form of shots that focus the viewer attention on specific information, characters, dialogue, action and so on (Mamer, 2014)”.

Visual stereotypes refer to the way “the viewer expects certain things to look” (Mamer, 2014). Reality “is encoded by certain social codes that relate to appearance, speech, sound, and setting” ( O'Donnell, 2017). Social codes must be represented realistically. In other words, social codes must align to the culture known to the viewers.

The director of Extraordinary Attorney Woo, explored creative approaches to transmit the representational codes. Transitions were very much observable in the episodes of the drama. Transitions, as observed, in Extraordinary Attorney Woo, brought the viewer from one setting to the other or from the present to the past or present into the future. Although typical transitions in a drama for example was cut, Extraordinary Attorney Woo also used other transitions such as dissolve or wipe but the usage depended on the purpose of the scene.

Editing in this paper is theorized as the Coherent Whole: Korean connect. The editor of the drama was able to achieve the goal of connecting frames together in order to create meaning and attain a cohesive whole. In editing, a special connection is established among different visual elements. The process of editing involves selecting and cutting. If an editor failed to establish connection between the four aspects of mise-en-scene (lighting, setting, costume, and the movement of figures) and cinematographic qualities (photography, framing, and camera mobility), no output will be formed, hence the word “connect” because when you cut, you need to connect.

In the drama, the common join was the cut which was true in almost all the episodes. There are, however, other methods of joining shots. These are fade out, fade in, dissolve, and wipe, which “produce more gradual changes” (Ibid).

Production Design was theorized as Authentic Visuality: Korean Look. Production design operates using the principle of naturalness. Whatever design that appears on screen must be realistic. Authentic visual concept is characterized by apparent color scheme, alignment of character and design, and consistent use of the Over-all production design theme.

It is called Korean Look because the Kdrama released a certain kind of vibe that could be traced to its production design. This vibe comes from the sets, wardrobe, and props. Even in the combination of choice of colors and applying a theme that binds all elements together - the Korean Look stands out. Hence, the production design gives Kdrama its identity unique from others.

The color scheme observed on Extraordinary Attorney Woo especially in Episode 1 was white, grey, wood, and subtle colors. The color scheme can be observed on the sets and wardrobe of the characters. O'Donnel (2017) explained that “for dramas, the look of the furnishing, the paint on the walls, and the costuming are more subdued”. Furthermore in drama, “brown, grays, blues, and other similar subdued colors are used” (Ibid). All throughout the drama, the feel and the look of the sets were subdued and subtle. The color of the drama was low key because the protagonist was unassuming, humble, and innocent. The choice of color reflected the over-all emotional appeal and the legal drama genre. On the other hand, the alignment of design and characters do not end in spaces occupied by the characters. Their wardrobe also spoke volumes of their personalities, choices, internal turmoils and motivations, among others. In Extraordinary Attorney Woo, the costumes were fitted to the kind of person the character was. It also reflected their mental and emotional states and also the scene's setting. The over-all theme or motif in the drama is wood (Figure.44). It can be seen in various spaces occupied by the character such as office, house, or restaurant. The wood could be the walls, floors, furniture, or simply objects in the scene. It could be just an accent to a space or the entire set is really made of wood. Wood's characteristics are “hard, grain, and color” (Richard, 2020). The strength of the wood lies in its hardness. The motif could have been chosen by the production designer because Atty. Woo as the protagonist could be compared to wood. Her character displayed strength despite her weaknesses. She never backed down in a challenge and would face the cases head on.

The job of the cinematographer will be incomplete and useless if there is no lighting on the set. “Lighting clearly is a key building block of the photographic image” (Mamer, 2014). Light suggests “the power of light, dark, and color to establish mood, suggest psychological states, and communicate the tactile qualities of observed objects” (Ibid). Hence, lighting in this research is theorized as cinematic glow: Korean mood. It is evidenced by communicating the scene's mood, use of variety of light sources, and mixture of range of colors. Cinematic glow refers to how each scene and frame shone brightly because of the lighting system.

Graphics Design in Extraordinary Attorney Woo is theorized as Impactful Graphics Design because of the high level of sophistication in the animated graphics and visual effects showcased. Impactful Graphics design is evidenced by strong visual support, animated graphics, functional graphic design, and visual effects integration.

It is Korean Imagination because of the creativity shown by the graphics designer in the drama. He was able to visualize the images in a way that delighted viewers since it was informative, colorful, funny at times and very on point. The graphics played a key role in the drama because it showed how Atty. Woo's brain worked. She had photographic memory and can recall the exact position of the word, concepts, or ideas in a document. The appearance of graphics was also realistic - documents complete with highlights.

In Extraordinary Attorney Woo, the kind of background music playing on a specific scene depended on the message that it wanted to convey. Most of the music used in order to set the mood were instrumental. During character dialogues, background music was played to achieve the planned mood of the scene. Actions of characters can be further amplified using sound effects or music. Music could also be used to intensify scenes. Sound effects make a scene flavorful.

The different technical elements analyzed in Extraordinary Attorney Woo showcased expertise and competence in production work. From cinematography, directing, editing, production design, lighting, graphics design, and audio design; there was a strong synergy which combined these elements together in order to produce a superior output. It was not only the narrative which made Korean drama an excellent creative work, but the technical elements contributed to its success as well. The drama showcased a higher level of competence in directing, editing, production design, lighting, graphics design, and audio design. The narrative of the Korean drama was a rich source of meaning. It combined the classic elements which the K Drama was known for with new approaches that enriched the meaning of the text. The narrative of the Korean dramas, particularly Extraordinary Attorney Woo, was the product of a thorough conceptualization process as evidenced by the different layers embedded in their text, multi-faceted characters, and strong plot. Korean dramas experimented with various concepts, and tackled different topics which made their text engaging and meaningful.

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## APPENDIX

### Module Sample (Using 3 E's Model)

Topic: Cinematography  
Material: Extraordinary Attorney Woo

#### **Engage**

Watch a snippet of Episode 9 of Extraordinary Woo. Observe and watch how cinematography was used in this particular episode. List down observations especially on the kind of shots, framing, and creative execution. Share observations to the big class.

#### **Explain ( this is based on this research)**

In Extraordinary Attorney Woo the Korean eye was flawless. It was able to achieve a creative combination of different shots, angles, and principles of composition. In one scene, for example, there are different shots and angles and the shifting of one shot to the other is very quick.

As an example, in Episode 9 of the Kdrama at 1:09:50, the episode began with an aerial view of a school. Cars and a school bus were seen lining up. The camera slowly zooms in to the area. The next shot was a full shot of children running, with some children being fetched by their parents. In that scene alone, there were a total of at least six different shots showing the different scenarios such as children running towards the school bus a child getting inside the bus and children running in different directions. Moreover, it also showed the interior activities in the bus.

Kdramas follow a certain pattern in their cinematography, and this was evident in the different episodes. The shallow depth of field was noticeable especially if the shoot is MCU or medium close up. Shallow depth of field “enables you to isolate a subject spatially, keeping it sharp with blurred surroundings, and avoids the distraction of irrelevant subjects” (Owens, 2016).

## Evaluate

Create a 1 minute video featuring the different parts of the university. In your video, make sure to combine different shots and angles to demonstrate the Korean way of cinematography. Rubrics will given for your reference.

## Rubrics

Criteria	Excellent (10 points)	Good (8 points)	Satisfactory (6 points)	Needs Improvement (4 points)	Unsatisfactory (0 points)	Points
<b>Shots</b>	Shots are varied and thoughtfully selected, enhancing the narrative. Excellent use of angles, movements, and perspectives.	Shots are mostly varied and appropriate for the narrative. Good use of angles and movements.	Shots are somewhat varied, but may lack creativity or relevance to the narrative.	Limited variety or inappropriate use of shots. Significant missed opportunities for storytelling through shots.	No effective use of shots; lacks relevance to the narrative.	/10
<b>Framing</b>	Perfect framing that enhances the composition and focus; draws attention to key elements effectively.	Good framing that supports the composition, with minor distractions that do not detract from the overall image.	Adequate framing, but may have some distracting elements or inconsistencies in focus.	Poor framing that distracts from the composition; key elements may be out of focus or poorly placed.	No effective framing; unclear focus or composition.	/10
<b>Creative Execution</b>	Exceptionally creative execution of cinematography techniques; innovative and original approaches enhance the work.	Good creativity in the execution of techniques; demonstrates originality with some effective choices.	Some creativity in execution, but may rely on clichés or conventional techniques without much originality.	Limited creativity; fails to explore new techniques or ideas; execution feels routine and lacks engagement.	No creative execution; lacks originality or effort.	/10
<b>Overall Aesthetic</b>	The overall visual aesthetic is stunning and cohesive, enhancing the storytelling and emotional impact.	The visual aesthetic is appealing and mostly cohesive, supporting the narrative effectively.	The overall aesthetic is adequate but lacks a strong connection to the narrative or emotional tone.	The aesthetic is unappealing or inconsistent, detracting from the overall experience.	No cohesive aesthetic; visuals do not support the narrative.	/10
<b>Technical Quality</b>	Excellent technical quality with clear images, proper lighting, and sound that enhance the viewing experience.	Good technical quality with minor issues that do not significantly affect the overall experience.	Adequate technical quality; some noticeable issues that may distract from the viewing experience.	Poor technical quality that significantly detracts from the viewing experience, including issues with clarity or sound.	No technical quality; images or sound are unwatchable.	/10



# Statistical Literacy of Grade 10 Students: Basis for the Development of Instructional Materials in Probability and Statistics for SHS

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## ABSTRACT

This developmental study determined the least mastered competencies of grade 10 students in Iloilo and developed a learning guide in statistics and probability. The study started with determining the least mastered competencies using a researcher-made statistical literacy instrument (SLI), which was validated and reliability tested. This SLI also determined the Statistical Literacy of the three hundred thirty-six (336) students selected through multi-stage sampling. SLI showed that students' Statistical Literacy level was only widely spread at the "Beginning" level. The findings revealed that the students needed to be more decisive in calculating central tendency, variability, and possible events. Factors influencing literacy level were track of choice, school type, school location, and type of curriculum. Those who enrolled in STEM performed better than those in other strands. Students from private schools performed better than those from public schools, city schools achieved better than those in the province, and Special Science classes outperformed those in the regular classes. The Learning Guide in Statistics and Probability for Senior High School was developed and composed of five lessons based on the prescribed Curriculum Guide by DepED. The Learning Guide features GeoGebra and free online calculators. It has the following parts: Topic Title, Introduction, Time Allotment, Least Mastered Competencies Addressed, Content, Objectives, Explore, Firm Up, Deepen, Transfer, Reflection, Concept Map, and References. The Learning Guide was tested for improvement and refinement. The revised output was presented to thirteen experts for evaluation using the adopted Instructional Material Evaluation Tool. Statistics and Probability teachers can use the Revised Learning Guide since it was evaluated as "excellent."

**Keywords:** Statistical literacy, Instructional Material Development, online calculator, competencies

## Introduction

The 2015 World Statistics Day theme, "Better data, better lives," depicts the importance of statistics in today's world. Statistics is the science of collecting, organizing, presenting, analyzing, and interpreting data or information. Statistics are required to make sense of societal functioning. It is used daily for weather forecasts, predicting the spread of diseases, population growth, employment rates, educational achievement, preparing for emergencies, medical research, political campaigns, tracking sales, genetics, insurance, the stock market, quality testing, etc. With technological advancements, it cannot be denied that people encounter volumes of information every day and everywhere; thus, statistical literacy is an important skill. Statistical Literacy includes basic skills that may be used in understanding statistical information or research results; this includes organizing data, constructing and displaying tables, and working with different representations of data. It also includes an understanding of concepts, vocabulary, and symbols. Moreover, it includes understanding probabilities as a measure of uncertainty (Garfield, 2002).

The Philippines consistently performed low in various assessments like NEAT in 1988, where the achievement score of the elementary pupils was 55.2%, below the standard of 75%. National Achievement Test (NAT) for Grade 6 in 2009, the passing rate for grade 6 was 69.2%, while for high school, it was 46—4%. Similar performance was shown in international math tests. In the 2003 Trends in the International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Philippines ranked 34th out of 38 countries in High School II Mathematics, 43rd out of 46 countries in High School II Science; for Grade 4, the Philippines ranked 23rd out of 25 countries in both Science and Mathematics. In 2008, in the advanced Mathematics Category, with the participation of Science High Schools only, the Philippines ranked the lowest (Dep Ed, 2010). Mathematically literate adults should know examples of the technological application of Mathematics, be able to decode popular information that contains Mathematics, and participate in political discussions that

draw on Statistics and results. The study of Vistru–Yu and Cuyegken (2002) showed that the mathematical and science literacy of Filipinos who just finished their 4th year of high school is just average. Also, it was shown that Filipino students have difficulty with items that require the interpretation of graphs (Villena, 2008).

Implementing K to 12 is one of the government's solutions to the increasing need for a statistically literate population. Before K-12, statistics was not offered to all; only special classes had statistics, and other schools offered it as an elective course. In the present curriculum, Statistics is taught from kindergarten to senior high school. In its fourth year of implementation, this year's Grade 10 were able to have Statistics as part of their math subject from Grade 7 to Grade 10. Government agencies such as the Philippine Statistical Authority and the National Statistics Office sponsor annual activities like the Philippine Statistical Quiz Statistical Analysis to assess the competency and skills of students in Statistics as acquired from the secondary education curriculum. It likewise hopes to promote, enhance, and instill awareness and appreciation of the importance and value of Statistics among the students. It also seeks to generate public awareness of the importance of Statistics in all development-planning activities and win overall support for all government statistical activities. Local professional organizations such as the Philippine Statistical Association Incorporated (PSAI VI) and Mathematics Teachers Association of the Philippines Iloilo Chapter (MTAP) sponsor activities such as teacher/student training in Statistics. There was a three-day Training course in Statistics for Secondary Teachers in K to 12. Curricular Perspective: The primary goal is to enhance the teachers' capability to teach statistics and develop instructional materials. During the open forum, most teachers in the DepEd said that most of the time, they couldn't finish the topics because Statistics is placed in the last quarter of the year when the activities are congested. This confirms Carmencita Alagabia's "Status of Statistics Education in the Philippine Secondary Schools" article. One reason given was the lack of instructional materials. Even before implementing the K to 12 Curriculum, some series claimed a need for instructional materials for statistics. According to Bersales(2010) in, "The Teaching of Statistics in the Philippines: Moving to a Brighter Future," the challenges in the teaching of Statistics are 1) lack of qualified teachers, 2) lack of locally produced educational materials; and 3) availability of other teaching aids such as computer software, (David & Maligalig 2006 & Tabunda, 2006 and Reston & Bersales 2008 cited in Bersales 2010). As a teacher in an institution offering Senior High School, the researcher shares the problem: the lack of instructional materials. This has become her driving force to work on this topic.

### **Theoretical Framework of the Study**

This study was anchored upon various theories. The first is Thorndike's Law of Readiness. The Law of Readiness states that the extent of a preparatory set determines a learner's satisfaction with his readiness for action. This law is explained by the statement, "When the bond is not ready to act, is made to act, annoyance is caused." (Prakash, 2011). If the child is ready to learn, he learns quickly; if he is not, he cannot learn effectively. This means that for students to be mentally ready to learn, they must master specific knowledge and skills at one level before they can learn at the next level. For example, students who have not learned the application of a law have little chance of applying that law to more complex situations. Thus, determining the students' background in junior high school Statistics is essential in designing instructional materials for Senior High School.

Secondly, the Constructive Alignment Principle is used for devising teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks that directly address the learning outcomes intended in a way not typically achieved in traditional lectures, tutorial classes, and examinations (Biggs & Tang, cited in Training for Teachers in Senior High, 2015). Constructive alignment represents a marriage between a constructivist understanding of the nature of learning and an aligned design for outcomes-based teaching education.

Thirdly, this study followed the Input- Process- Output model, a graphical presentation of all the factors that make up a process. This model isolates the factor or significant variable that causes the problem, subject, and phenomenon under investigation (Cristobal & Cristobal, 2017). An input-process-output diagram includes all the materials and information required for the process, details of the process, and descriptions of all products and by-products resulting from the process (Business Dictionary). Ludwig Van Bertalanffy Weihrich (1988) developed this model, which postulates that an organized enterprise does not exist in isolation; it depends on its established environment. They added that the organization receives input from the environment and then transforms it into output after processing such inputs. Input is whatever one needs

or has when one starts a project — information, ideas, project goals, and people. In this study, input was the background of grade 10 students, specifically their statistical literacy. The process is whatever one does during the project, including various tools and methods to develop an output. In this case, it would be designing the instructional materials. This study's output or outcome would be the instructional materials in Statistics for Senior High School. Figure 1 below shows the paradigm of the study highlighting how the result of the Statistical Literacy Instrument was used in the process of developing instructional materials

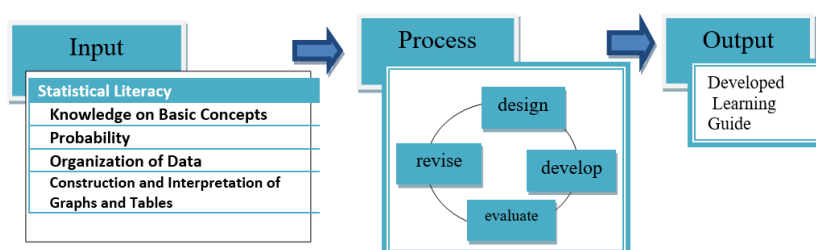


Figure 1. The paradigm of the study.

## Statement of the Problem

This study developed instructional materials for senior high school probability and statistics based on the statistical literacy of Grade 10 students in high schools in the City and Province of Iloilo. Specifically, this study answered the following questions:

1. What is the level of statistical literacy of Grade 10 students in terms of knowledge of basic concepts, probability, organization of data, construction, and interpretation of graphs and tables when taken as a whole and when grouped according to a. sex? b. type of curriculum? c. school type? And, d. location of the school?
2. Is there a significant difference in the level of statistical literacy of Grade 10 students in terms of knowledge of basic concepts, probability, organization of data, construction, and interpretation of graphs and tables when grouped according to a. sex? b. type of curriculum? c. school type? And, d. location of the school?
3. What are the least mastered learning competencies of Grade 10 students when taken as a whole?
4. What instructional materials/plan can be proposed to address the least mastered competencies in Statistics?

## Hypotheses

Based on the inferential research questions, the following hypotheses were tested:

There are no significant differences in the level of statistical literacy of Grade 10 students in terms of knowledge of basic concepts, vocabulary, symbols, probability, organization of data, construction, and interpretation of graphs and tables when they are grouped according to a. sex. b. type of curriculum? c. school type? and, d. location of the school?

## Research Design

This study employed Type 1 developmental research studies, a method that can address a broad range of issues using multiple strategies. Developmental research is divided into two different types (Mejia, 2009). Type 1 research is the most context-specific inquiry. This type focuses on designing and developing an instructional product or program, while Type 2 Research includes evaluation tools or models used to analyze existing designs. The study also addresses the production of course materials. This study determined the statistical literacy and skills of the Grade 10 students in Iloilo who had least mastered statistics, and it used this information to develop instructional materials for Senior High School Statistics.

## Methodology

### The Respondents of the Study

*Student respondents.* The study's respondents were 336 Grade 10 high school students from the representative sections of selected high schools from the City and Province of Iloilo. Respondents were selected using multi-stage sampling.

*Teacher Respondents.* The teacher respondents were the 13 Statistics teachers from public and private schools and Universities who are presently teaching or have been teaching Statistics evaluated the instructional materials.

### Data Gathering Instruments

This study utilized two research instruments: the Statistical Literacy Instrument (SLI) and an evaluation tool for the learning material, adapted from Cenarosa (2005). The SLI was expert-reviewed and reliability-tested, while the evaluation tool assessed various aspects of the Learning Guide (LG).

### Instrument

#### *Statistical Literacy Instrument (SLI)*

The SLI is a researcher-made questionnaire comprising two parts:

1. Profile Checklist: Information on respondents, such as sex, school type, and location.
2. Statistical Literacy Test: Comprising four components—Basic Concepts, Probability, Organization of Data, and Graph Construction/Interpretation—originally containing 88 items based on DepEd's curriculum guide for Grades 7, 8, and 10. After validation and pilot testing with Grade 10 students, 65 items remained with a reliability value of  $KR21 = .77$ .

Interpretation of Scores:

- 85.60-100: Advanced (A)
- 76-85.59: Proficient (P)
- 69-75.99: Approaching Proficient (AP)
- 59.01-67.99: Developing (D)
- Below 59: Beginning (B)

The mastery levels were assessed based on correct response percentages.

#### *Evaluation Tool for the Material*

The evaluation tool rated the LG on physical appearance, objectives, instruction, learning activities, and evaluative materials using a five-point scale.

Rating Scale:

- 4.21-5.00: Excellent
- 3.41-4.20: Very Satisfactory
- 2.61-3.40: Satisfactory
- 1.81-2.60: Fair
- 1.0-1.80: Poor

### Data Collection Procedure

The data collection involved three phases:

Phase 1: Secured permissions and conducted the Statistical Literacy Test, followed by data analysis to identify literacy levels and least mastered competencies. Phase 2: Designed and piloted the instructional material based on least mastered competencies, using the ADDIE Model. Phase 3: Expert evaluations of the instructional material.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis varied by phase. Means and standard deviations were used to assess statistical literacy across various demographics and applied t-tests/ANOVA for group comparisons. In Phase 2: Incorporated feedback for revisions of the LG. Lastly, Phase 3: Evaluated expert feedback on the instructional material using means and standard deviations.

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were upheld, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality for respondents, particularly minors. Consent letters were provided in both English and Hiligaynon, translation was done by expert in local dialect.

## Results and Discussions

Table 2 shows that, in general, the Statistical Literacy Grade 10 students were widely spread, described as "Beginning" in the knowledge of basic concepts ( $M = 42.13$ ,  $SD = 15.15$ ), organization of data ( $M = 40.82$ ,  $SD = 19.17$ ), probability ( $M = 45.98$ ,  $SD = 17.62$ ), and construction/interpretation of graphs and tables ( $M = 54.64$ ,  $SD = 22.35$ ). This alarming result confirms the result of the study done by Capate and Lapinid (2015). In their study on one of the pioneer Grade 8 batches of K to 12 in the Philippines, they found that in both Geometry and Statistics and Probability, the achievement of students was just below the passing mark by a significant value with a qualitative description of Beginning, which could mean that students had difficulty grasping the content of these subjects.

Table 2: Students' Literacy level in Statistics when taken as a whole

	N	SD	M	Description
Basic Concept	336	15.15	42.13	Beginning
Organization of Data	336	19.17	40.82	Beginning
Probability	336	17.62	45.98	Beginning
Graph construction/interpretation	336	22.35	54.64	Beginning
Total	336	14.55	46.16	Beginning

Note. Interpretation is based on the following scale: Beginning (B)= 59 and below, developing (D)= 59.01.-67.99, Approaching Proficient(AP)=68-75.99, Proficient (P)=76-85.59, Advanced (A)= 85.60-100

Basic Statistics concepts include descriptive measures, essential terms, and symbols. Table 3 shows that regardless of sex, school location, school type, and curriculum, the level of Statistical Literacy of Grade 10 students is "Beginning." The group with the lowest mean is those in the regular class ( $M = 35.4$ ,  $SD = 11.25$ ), while those with slightly higher means are those from private schools ( $M = 50.13$ ,  $SD = 17.83$ ). Data organization includes items that deal with the frequency distribution table, identification of its part, and the relationships among the different parts.

Table 4 shows that the literacy level in Statistics, regardless of sex, school location, school type, and curriculum of Grade 10 students, were all "Beginning." The means of their literacy level ranges from 35.71 to 47.76'. Students from the province registered the lowest mean ( $M = 35.71$ ,  $SD = 17.72$ ), while males showed the highest mean ( $M = 47.76$ ,  $SD = 17.97$ ), followed by those who are from the City Schools ( $M = 47.14$ ,  $SD = 19.07$ ).

Table 5 presents the students' literacy in terms of probability. This is determined by their answers to items that count possible outcomes, different counting rules, and simple probability. Table 5 shows that regardless of grouping, the level of students' literacy in terms of probability was widely spread at the "Beginning" level. Students coming from private schools registered at higher mean. Table 6 shows that in terms of graph construction or interpretation, the literacy level of students from private schools is "Developing" while the rest is "Beginning."

Table 3. Level of Students' Literacy in Statistics in terms of Basic Concepts when grouped according to the different Variables

Variables	Category	n	SD	M	Description
Sex	Male	123	14.58	41.93	Beginning
	Female	213	16.16	42.49	Beginning
School Location	Province	186	12.35	38.78	Beginning
	City	150	17.19	46.29	Beginning
School Type	Private	115	17.83	50.13	Beginning

Variables	Category	n	SD	M	Description
Curriculum	Public	221	11.58	37.97	Beginning
	Regular	126	11.25	35.4	Beginning
	Special	210	15.77	46.17	Beginning

*Note.* Interpretation is based on the following scale: Beginning (B)= 59 and below, Developing (D)= 59.01.-67.99, Approaching Proficient(AP)=68-75.99, Proficient (P)=76-85.59, Advanced (A)= 85.60-100

Table 4. Level of Students' Literacy in Statistics in terms of Organization of Data when grouped according to the different Variables

Variables	Category	n	SD	M	Description
Sex	Male	123	17.97	47.76	Beginning
	Female	213	19.08	46.56	Beginning
School Location	Province	186	17.72	35.71	Beginning
	City	150	19.07	47.14	Beginning
School Type	Private	115	19.1	44.84	Beginning
	Public	221	18.91	38.72	Beginning
Curriculum	Regular	126	17.02	37.53	Beginning
	Special	210	20.13	42.79	Beginning

*Note.* Interpretation is based on the following scale: Beginning (B)= 59 and below, Developing (D)= 59.01.-67.99, Approaching Proficient(AP)=68-75.99, Proficient (P)=76-85.59, Advanced (A)= 85.60-100.

Table 5. Level of Students' Literacy in Statistics in terms of Probability when grouped according to the different Variables

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Description</i>
Sex	Male	123	20.74	34.39	Beginning
	Female	213	22.26	37.8	Beginning
School Location	Province	186	16.38	44.66	Beginning
	City	150	18.97	47.61	Beginning
School Type	Private	115	18.14	51.9	Beginning
	Public	221	16.56	42.89	Beginning
Curriculum	Regular	126	14.36	47.02	Beginning
	Special	210	19.32	45.35	Beginning

*Note.* Interpretation is based on the following scale: Beginning (B)= 59 and below, Developing (D)= 59.01.-67.99, Approaching Proficient(AP)=68-75.99, Proficient (P)=76-85.59, Advanced (A)= 85.60-100

Table 6. Level of Students' Literacy in Statistics in terms of Graph Construction/Interpretation when grouped according to the different Variables

		n	SD	M	Description
Sex	Male	123	20.45	39.24	Beginning
	Female	213	23.32	41.12	Beginning
School Location	Province	186	22.77	52.8	Beginning
	City	150	21.67	56.93	Beginning
School Type	Private	115	21.5	62.09	Developing
	Public	221	21.84	50.77	Beginning
Curriculum	Regular	126	19.83	57.78	Beginning
	Special	210	23.58	52.76	Beginning

*Note.* Interpretation is based on the following scale: Beginning (B)= 59 and below, developing (D)= 59.01.-67.99, Approaching Proficient(AP)=68-75.99, Proficient (P)=76-85.59, Advanced (A)= 85.60-100



## On the Least Mastered Learning Competencies of Students

The least mastered competencies are those with the lowest average percentage of students who answered correctly. These were identified to help the researcher develop a Learning Guide to address this. Table 7 presents the ten least mastered learning competencies of students. These were competencies under the knowledge of basic concepts, specifically calculations and calculations and interpretation of descriptive measures of central tendency, variability, position, organization of data, and probability. This result agrees with the result of the study done by Makwakwa in 2012, which revealed that problems encountered by students in learning Statistics are as follows: calculation /interpretation of measure of variability, central tendency, computation of quartiles when sample size is even, representing data on graph and plots, constructing and interpreting probability graphs and tables, and probability terms and results of study by Ghinis, Korres, and Bersimis (2017) also stated that students have difficulty in understanding basic statistical concepts (with this particular questions in basic statistical concepts, such as population, sample, measures of variation, distribution, etc.). All these were considered in the development of the Learning Guide.

Table 7. Mastery Level on Specific Competencies in Statistics of students

Competencies	%	Mastery level
illustrating the measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) of a statistical data.	41.51	No Mastery
calculating the measures of central tendency of ungrouped and grouped data.	45.86	No Mastery
illustrating the measures of variability (range, average deviation, variance, standard deviation) of statistical data.	41.9	No Mastery
calculating the measures of variability of grouped and ungrouped data.	30.95	No Mastery
drawing conclusions from graphic and tabular data and measures of central tendency and variability.	42.7	No Mastery
illustrating the following measures of position: quartiles, deciles and percentiles	41.86	No Mastery
calculating a specified measure of position (e.g. 90th percentile) of a set of data.	27.71	No Mastery
interpreting measures of position	37.51	No Mastery
organizing data in a frequency distribution table.	35.64	No Mastery
using appropriate graphs to represent organized data: pie chart, bar graph, line graph, histogram, and ogive	37.91	No Mastery
illustrating an experiment, outcome, sample space and event	41.66	No Mastery
illustrating events, and union and intersection of events.	62.16	Low Mastery
illustrating mutually exclusive events.	34.29	No Mastery
counting the number of occurrences of an outcome in an experiment: (a) table; (b) tree diagram; (c) systematic listing; and (d) fundamental counting principle.	41.61	No Mastery
illustrating the permutation/combinations of objects.	51.3	Low Mastery
solving problems involving permutations and combinations	38.31	No Mastery
deriving the formula for finding the number of permutations of n objects taken r at a time.	49.29	No Mastery
solving problems involving probability.	46.59	No Mastery
Solving routine and non-routine problems using data presented in a pie graph	59.35	Low Mastery
interpreting data presented in a graph	50.69	Low Mastery

Note: Level of Mastery: No Mastery ( below 50), Low Mastery ( 50-74), Near Mastery (75-79),Mastery(80-89), Near full Mastery (90-99) Full mastery (100) Bermundo and Bermundo (2005)

## Phase Two: Designing and Development of the Learning Guide

The results showed that most of the least mastered competencies of the Grade 10 students can be summarized in calculations. When some students were asked why they could not master calculations, they said they could not remember the formula and found it challenging to deal with large data sets. Some

teachers admitted they could not cover the prescribed content due to limited time. Thus, the proposed Learning Guide should address problems with calculations and limited time. It, therefore, calls for technology integration, which will aid the students in calculation. Technology integration, however, implies a software cost, laboratory, and maintenance budget. Hence, the researcher looked for free online calculators and found this free software, GeoGebra. This free software is downloadable for desktops, laptops, and Android phones.

GeoGebra and other free online calculators were featured in the Learning Guide, which was based on identified least mastered competencies. It followed the DepEd curriculum guide for Statistics and Probability for the content and has the complete parts of the learning plan used by the University of San Agustin (USA) SHS. These parts include the topic title, introduction, time allocation, content, objectives, exploration, firm up, deepen, transfer, least mastered competencies, concept maps (if applicable), and reflection. It features GeoGebra and other online calculators whenever applicable.

In developing the Learning Guide, the researcher was under the supervision of her adviser and two content editors who are Masters of Statistics, teaching Statistics at the tertiary level, and are holding higher posts in the Philippine Statistical Association Incorporation 6 (PSAI6). Every lesson done by the researcher was submitted to them in person or through electronic mail for correction/suggestions in terms of content. Their corrections/comments and suggestions were used to revise the materials and then presented to the faculty of USA SHS for comments/suggestions, especially on the strategy and style. Their suggestions and comments were again integrated into the Learning Guide. When the five lessons were complete, these were presented to the panel members for pilot testing. Two lessons were pilot-tested by the researcher and three other teachers in USA SHS in the second semester of AY 2016-2017 in the different sections of Grade 11 of the following strands: STEM, ABM, and GAS. After the pilot testing, comments, observations, and suggestions from the panel members, teachers, and students were used to revise the material. Lastly, the ring-bound material was presented to selected teachers who teach Statistics at tertiary or secondary levels for evaluation.

### **The Developed Learning Guide in Statistics and Probability for Senior High School**

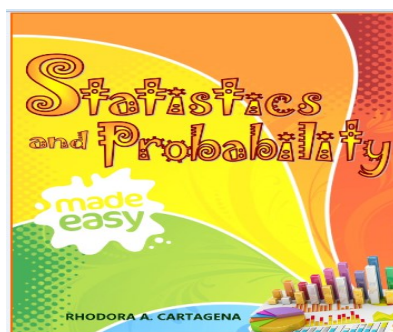


Figure 3. The cover of the developed Learning Guide in Statistics and Probability designed by Ms Lordelyn Santias

Statistics and Probability are core subjects in senior high school. This subject is considered by many as one of the most difficult because there are so many formulae to memorize and large amounts of data to calculate. Similarly, teachers consider this subject difficult to teach. The purpose of this Learning Guide is to help make teaching Statistics easy by providing teachers with the materials they can use to present various topics easily. This Learning Guide (see Figure 3) was developed based on the result of the Statistical Literacy Instrument administered to randomly selected Grade 10 students in the City and Province of Iloilo. The result revealed that the students' literacy was widely spread at the "Beginning" level, particularly in basic concepts, data organization, Probability, and graph construction and interpretation. This means that their scores on the literacy test were below passing, and they lack mastery of the different competencies prescribed by the Department of Education (Dep Ed), as stated in the curriculum guide. The list of least mastered learning competencies showed they are weak in the calculation. Hence, this Learning Guide features Geogebra and other free online calculators to address students' weaknesses in calculation.



This Learning Guide covers essential and attainable content of new K to 12 curriculum guides for Senior High School. It includes five lessons: 1: Random variables, 2: Sampling and sampling distributions, 3: Normal Distribution, 4: Estimation of Parameters, and 5: Hypothesis testing. Every lesson contains the following parts: Introduction, Time, Objectives, Content, Explore, Firm Up, Deepen, Transfer, Summary of Formula/ Concept Map/ Guide using Geogebra or online calculator if applicable, Reflection, Bibliography, and a PowerPoint presentation.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

- The statistical literacy of Grade 10 students is “Beginning” in all areas of Statistics. They show no mastery of the competencies required by the new K to 12 curriculums in Statistics for Junior High School in preparation for Senior High School. Furthermore, most students are not yet ready to learn new and more complex concepts. Thus, it seems that a lot of expertise in content and pedagogy is required of the teacher to teach students new concepts and skills in statistics effectively.
- Factors that significantly affect the level of statistical literacy of Grade 10 students were school type, school location, and type of curriculum. Private school students performed better than public school students because they had fewer students in a class and better facilities. More so, parents in private schools can afford to hire tutors to follow up on their children’s academic success. Further, students from the city schools performed better than those from the province.
- On the other hand, the developed Learning Guide in Statistics and Probability for Senior High School features the experts evaluating the use of GeoGebra and other free online calculators as “**Excellent**,” therefore, teachers in Senior High School can deliver the subject better. The Learning Guide may level up the competencies of students.

## Implications for Theory and Practice:

**For Theory:** This study assessed the statistical literacy level of Grade 10 students in Iloilo, identified the least mastered competencies, and used these to develop a Learning Guide in Statistics and Probability. The findings of this study have shown that the student's literacy in Statistics was only at the "Beginning" level, particularly in basic concepts, organization of data, probability, and graph construction/interpretation. This implies they are not yet ready for the next level of competencies to master in the Senior High School. This reflects a lack of foundational knowledge crucial for advanced statistical skills. The curriculum's novelty and teachers' inadequate preparation contribute to this gap, highlighting the need for effective teaching materials aligned with the new curriculum.

**For Practice:** The study highlights students' deficiencies in Statistics stemming from their prior education. It is common knowledge that Statistics is a sequential subject. That is, every topic builds on other previous concepts. Statistics is popularly defined by Kuzma & Bohnenblust (2005) as a body of techniques and procedures for collecting, organizing, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting information that can be stated numerically. The calculation, which the students least mastered, occurs in data organization. The analysis and interpretation of data depend on the organization of the data. Thus, erroneous calculations will lead to erroneous analysis and interpretation. Hence, learning gaps must be addressed immediately to ensure the smooth flow of the procedure. The challenge among mathematics teachers is how to effect improvement in the student if all statistics teachers ensure that all topics in mathematics courses where statistics and probability are included will be covered at least at a proficient mastery level. More importantly, the teachers should have the initiative to equip themselves to become at least proficient in teaching the subject by exposing themselves to continuing professional development focused on Statistics.

## Recommendations

1. Curriculum Planners and Policy Makers: Reevaluate the curriculum's implementation and effectiveness. Collaborate with educational agencies and organizations to develop uniform resources and improve professional development models.

2. School Administrators: Provide ongoing professional development for Statistics teachers and support them through seminars and in-service training to enhance teaching methods and content mastery.
3. Textbook Writers: Develop textbooks and teaching guides aligned with the new curriculum, incorporating technology and contextualized content to support student learning.
4. Mathematics and Statistics Teachers: Familiarize themselves with current pedagogical guidelines and engage in self-driven professional development. Utilize practical Learning Guides and resources to enhance instruction.
5. Student Researchers: Use the study's findings to guide future research on developing teaching modules and pedagogical strategies for Grade 10 Statistics and Probability.

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# Integrating ChatGPT in Translation Learning

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## ABSTRACT

ChatGPT has existed briefly, but it has brought great changes to many fields including education. The study contributes to the knowledge of how ChatGPT can be applied to develop students' translation skills and abilities. This paper provides an overview of the advantages and limitations of using ChatGPT in translation. It also explores the integration of ChatGPT into an advanced translation course within an English language program at a university in Vietnam. In this course, students were tasked with using ChatGPT to support their translation process. The results showed that ChatGPT was feasible and useful in the translation classrooms, with students initially responding positively. The paper also presents various strategies for teachers to incorporate ChatGPT into their translation courses effectively.

**Keywords:** ChatGPT, Translation teaching, Translation process, Text analysis, Students' perceptions

## Introduction

In today's globalized world, the importance of translation skills cannot be undermined. As communication across languages becomes increasingly vital in various fields, from business to diplomacy, the demand for proficient translators continues to rise. Language programs that aim to train human resources in foreign languages often include translation courses to boost learners' language proficiency but also improve their translation skills (Nguyen, 2023a, 2023b). Traditionally, translation education has focused on manual methods, where students engage in word-for-word translation exercises and rely heavily on printed dictionaries and reference materials. Scholars including Pham and Tran (2013) and Nguyen (2023a, 2023b) acknowledge the limitations of translation courses in tertiary English programs in Vietnam in terms of teaching methods and curricula, which causes translation courses to fall short in preparing graduates for their employment as translators. They refer to "trial-and-error methods, arbitrary teaching points and hands-on experience" in teaching translation (Pham & Tran, 2013, p. 11). These translation classes are often non-engaging and monotonous. Therefore, as technology advances, there is a need to integrate digital tools into the translation classroom to better prepare students for the demands of the modern workplace.

Among these emerging tools, ChatGPT, an advanced AI language model developed by OpenAI, presents a promising addition to translation education. The generative language model ChatGPT is sophisticated, multifaceted, and potent; it can understand and generate natural language (Kasneci et al., 2023; Lund & Wang, 2023). By combining a large amount of textual data, it may provide intelligent and contextually appropriate responses to questions. According to Lund and Wang (2023), ChatGPT is a flexible software that can carry out human-like particular activities such as offering clarifications, responding to factual inquiries, coming up with innovative ideas, and participating in formal and informal discussions. By leveraging such technology, educators can enhance the learning experience, making it more interactive and engaging for students. While teaching translation in Vietnam and integrating technology into translation classes are still limited, this paper presents a pedagogical proposal in which ChatGPT is used in a translation class in an English program at the tertiary level in Vietnam. Procedures and methods of integrating ChatGPT in translation classes will benefit translation educators in Vietnam and other similar contexts.

## Literature Review

### *ChatGPT and translation*

ChatGPT is considered a generally effective tool for translation. Studies indicate that ChatGPT can perform human-like translations that are generally accurate and reliable (Alkhawaja, 2024; Sahari et al., 2023). With

appropriate prompts, ChatGPT can provide instant translations, which can benefit businesses and organizations. ChatGPT helps reduce initial translation time, allowing human translators to focus on refining and ensuring accuracy (Sahari et al., 2023). Compared with other machine translation tools, ChatGPT generally achieves competitive results. For example, Hidayati and Nihayah (2024) found that AI-generated translations are more contextually accurate than those produced by Google Translate due to AI's natural language processing and AI's capability in academic writing. Similarly, Alkhawaja (2024) illustrated that ChatGPT "impressively" outdid Google Translate in terms of translation performance.

Despite ChatGPT's merits, there is room for improvement in the translation work of ChatGPT. ChatGPT can work well in translating texts with simple straightforward content and often struggles with more complex structures and nuances. Lau et al. (2024) mentioned that AI translators cannot perceive poets' feelings and thoughts. In dealing with specific translation issues including separable phrasal verbs (Alosaimi & Alawad, 2024), it is identified that ChatGPT seems ineffective though ChatGPT-generated translations are understandable. Besides, ChatGPT cannot translate culturally sensitive items that require context-rich processing data in religious texts (Banat & Adla, 2023). Furthermore, Sahari et al. (2023) insist that ChatGPT is more efficient in mechanical tasks of writing and editing translated texts than fine-tuning which involves more critical thinking. Admittedly, studies scrutinizing the quality of ChatGPT translations do not deny the role of humans in producing high-quality translations (Alkhawaja, 2024; Sahari et al., 2023). They maintained that despite the promising translation capacities of ChatGPT, it could not catch up with human translators whose intervention is needed to ensure the high level of cohesion, fluency and accuracy of a translation. Also, ChatGPT use in translation tasks can pose ethical concerns involving knowledge security and ideological bias as found in education and other aspects. Fan et al. (2023) explained that ChatGPT cannot make moral judgments of the content which can be under the influence of Western discourse and ideologies.

### ***The use of ChatGPT in translation teaching***

Like in language teaching which witnessed students' personalized learning and pedagogical changes (Ali et al., 2023; Baskara, 2023; Hoang et al., 2023; Mohammed et al., 2023), ChatGPT infuse new ideas into traditional translation classes. Conventional translation classes focus more on in-class interaction and transmission of knowledge and concepts instead of prioritizing students' critical thinking (An et al., 2023). Meanwhile, An et al. (2023) and Fan et al. (2023) are among very few scholars who have started to consider how to include ChatGPT in translation classes. They maintained that ChatGPT may allow more personalized learning opportunities. Students can be given modified instructions and instant feedback when they request the provision of different types of knowledge, ranging from translation theories to translation methods or when they have ChatGPT evaluate their translations. The authors insisted that ChatGPT can support teachers in developing their students' translation competence. For example, ChatGPT can help provide concepts of translation and explanation of vocabulary and sentence structures of a source text (ST). Students can refer to ChatGPT translation instantly after providing the ST or input. Alternatively, they can ask ChatGPT to analyze their translations' strengths and weaknesses and improve their translations. Generally, ChatGPT gains teachers' favor as it helps reduce their workload in presenting translation-related knowledge, marking students' translations, tracking students' progress and engaging them in translation learning (Fan et al., 2023).

Some concerns are raised regarding the application of ChatGPT in translation teaching (Fan et al., 2023). The authors explained that students may become more dependent on the tool as they easily obtain automatic translations with little time and intellectual effort. They cannot evaluate translation accuracy or eliminate culturally sensitive elements in ChatGPT-based translations. Therefore, it is essential to implement effective ways to use ChatGPT in translation and translation teaching. Fan et al. (2023) emphasized the necessity of innovating teaching models and promoting learners' autonomy while maintaining ethical principles and enhancing students' digital literacy. They proposed that the role of translation teachers in the new teaching process is still irreplaceable despite the more enhanced position of ChatGPT. The teacher should enable learners to become more critical in translation tasks to develop high-order thinking skills and avoid ethical issues. While early attempts to incorporate ChatGPT in translation teaching can be acknowledged, pedagogical proposals are limited, and empirical evidence is lacking.



The main question of how to use ChatGPT in translation and translation teaching revolves around developing effective prompts that help improve ChatGPT (Shaolong Liu, 2024). ChatGPT can produce a better translation with proper prompts. Translation prompts should have translation task information and/or context domain information including genre-related details. Effective prompts should contain contextual features that allow ChatGPT to act and think like a translator or train ChatGPT with the knowledge and skills of professional translators. This idea is aligned with the concept of translation brief by the functionalist approach to translation, which focuses on contextual features in the translation decision-making process.

### ***The functionalist approach and the translation process in translation teaching***

The translation process commences when the translator analyzes the text and continues until they find the appropriate target text (TT) segment (Zabalbeascoa, 2000). More specifically, Gile's sequential model of Translation with a two-phase operation: comprehension of the ST and reformulation or production of the TT (Gile, 2009). The translator formulates the "meaning hypothesis" (or understanding of the meaning) of a translation unit or text segment (word, phrase, paragraph, or text) based on their linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge and ad hoc knowledge (or knowledge of a specific field or situation). If the meaning hypothesis is plausible, they proceed to formulate the meaning hypothesis in the TT. During this phase, the translator produces the provisional TT segment and determines whether it meets the requirements of the "fidelity test" (accuracy) or the "acceptability test" (i.e., it is acceptable to the TT readers) by drawing on their linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge.

Many studies demonstrate a tendency to focus on students' ability to make informed translation decisions in translation studies, incorporating the functionalist approach to enhance students' translation process (Chen, 2010, Karoly, 2014, Nguyen, 2023a, 2023b). In the light of the functionalist approach to translation which emphasizes the purpose of translation, the translator starts with the translation brief which indicates why a translation is required, by whom, what the clients need, when, where the TT will be used, and who the TT addresses are. In the pre-translation stage, they are also aware of the ST's features including vocabulary, sentence structure, and topic or theme. It is also necessary to figure out translation problems, prioritizing pragmatic translation problems (related to differences in the situations of the ST and TT) to other cultural and linguistic translation problems. They can face translation problems in both phases: comprehending the ST and producing the TT. To deal with translation problems, the translator applies a variety of strategies. Translation strategies are classified into comprehension and production/translation strategies (Chesterman, 1997). They can resort to resources, skills, and solutions including dictionaries or translation tools during the translation stage, which forms part of their instrumental competence (Kelly, 2005). After producing the translation, the translator checks whether the translation product is functionally appropriate (a translation meets the function of translation), accurate (a translation should be coherent or have a relationship with its ST regarding the ST information transmitted to TT readers), or/and acceptable (a translation) is understandable to the readers.

This study views the translation process as a general term incorporating pre-translation (text analysis), translation, and post-translation (reflection on or revision of translation) (Nguyen, 2023a, 2023b). ChatGPT was introduced into a translation class to assist students in their translation process. In other words, students were instructed to use ChatGPT to understand ST features including vocabulary and structure of the ST, produce translations for their reference, or revise their translations.

### ***The Role of ChatGPT in Translation Classes***

ChatGPT offers innovative ways to facilitate the translation process. Translation educators can use ChatGPT to enhance students' knowledge and skills of understanding texts, providing sample translations, while also offering real-time feedback that helps refine their translations.

### ***Facilitating text analysis***

One of the main ways ChatGPT supports translation practice is through text analysis. It enables students to understand complex concepts in translation, and analyse texts, helping them identify key linguistic features and cultural nuances that are essential for accurate translation. This analytical approach is particularly

beneficial for students as they learn to look for information and understand the ST features including vocabulary and terminology. Additionally, ChatGPT aids in maintaining terminology consistency across translations, a critical factor in professional translation work where precision and uniformity are paramount. This tool allows students to input terms and phrases, which should be used consistently throughout the translation process, minimizing errors and improving the overall quality of the translation.

ChatGPT can help expand students' exposure to diverse language usage by allowing them to explore different registers, dialects, and cultural nuances. This exposure is vital for developing translators who need to be versatile and culturally aware. For instance, ChatGPT can generate examples of how a particular idiom or phrase might vary across different dialects or cultural contexts, providing students with a broader understanding of language diversity, which is essential to translation.

### ***Providing translation***

After analyzing STs, translators transfer to the translation stage. One of ChatGPT's primary strengths in translation is its ability to handle a broad spectrum of translation tasks. This includes translating sentences, paragraphs, or entire documents from one language to another while maintaining contextual relevance, and coherence. ChatGPT can assist students in learning translation skills by providing sample translations that highlight different styles and approaches. Students can compare their work with ChatGPT's outputs, gaining insights into context, grammar, and cultural nuances.

### ***Providing Immediate Feedback on students' translations***

Another significant advantage of incorporating ChatGPT into translation classes is its ability to provide immediate feedback. Instant feedback is crucial in the learning process as it allows students to quickly identify and correct errors, leading to a more efficient learning experience. ChatGPT can review a student's translation, highlight inaccuracies, and suggest improvements, offering specific examples of translation refinement. For instance, if a student translates a sentence inappropriately, ChatGPT can instantly point out the error and provide a corrected version, along with an explanation of why the correction was necessary. This real-time feedback not only helps students understand their mistakes but also reinforces proper translation techniques. Such immediate corrections and suggestions are also useful for complex translations involving idioms or culturally specific expressions, where precision is critical.

Effective prompts can help ChatGPT produce a better translation. Translation prompts should have translation task information and/or context domain information (including genre-related details), aligning well with the functionalist approach to translation which emphasizes the role of contextual features in translation. Effective prompts should contain contextual features that allow ChatGPT to act and think like a translator who can make informed translation decisions based on situational features.

## **Methods**

### ***The Setting and Participants***

The research was conducted in early 2024 which fell in the second semester of the academic year in an English language program at a university in Vietnam. 119 participants were from an Advanced English course designed to teach legal translation. The four-year students had mastered translation knowledge and strategies presented in previous translation practice courses and translation strategies. Groups of students were allowed to participate in workshops on ChatGPT use in translation and discuss their experience in translation and ChatGPT uses if they had ever used it.

### ***Workshop on ChatGPT in translation***

In the workshop, ChatGPT was introduced to promote students' knowledge and translation processes of legal translation. Specifically, groups of students compared ChatGPT results produced on their own and those obtained from the use of detailed prompts informed by the principles of the functionalist approaches to translation. In terms of knowledge of legal translation, students used prompts that contained different aspects of legal translation such as types of legal text, translation problems, translation strategies in legal

translations and translation criteria in legal translation. Then the author, the lecturer in the workshop, commented on ChatGPT findings and further elaborated on legal translation.

Regarding the usefulness of ChatGPT in students' translation process, pairs of students were guided to use ChatGPT in the English-Vietnamese translation of short extracts from the Australian text - "General Tenancy Agreement", using prompts informed by the functional approaches to translation. Specifically, prompts should contain contextual elements that provide helpful clues to boost ChatGPT's performance. After exploring the situational features of the ST, the students asked ChatGPT to explain the vocabulary and terminology of the ST. Some examples (in Vietnamese or English) included "Phân biệt 'Division, subdivision, item' trong cấu trúc văn bản" [Distinguish Division, subdivision, item' as parts of a document], "Entry condition report trong lĩnh vực thuê nhà là gì?" [What does 'Entry condition report' mean in a tenancy in Australia?], and "Rental bond trong lĩnh vực thuê nhà ở Úc là gì?" [What does "rental bond" mean in a tenancy in Australia?].

Next, the students chose to have the ST translated by ChatGPT or have their translations revised by ChatGPT. In the former case, the students were instructed to include the text type and features of the ST, for example, "Translate into Vietnamese the following extract from an Australian General Tenancy Agreement". In the latter, the students included specific criteria for a good translation. An example of this type of prompt is "Evaluate/Review the Vietnamese translation of an extract from an Australian General Tenancy Agreement (presented above) in terms of functional appropriateness, accuracy, and acceptability".

In the last part of the workshop, the students reflected on their translations and their use of ChatGPT. They were asked how they used ChatGPT during the translation of the Tenancy contract and what comments they had about ChatGPT in their translation process.

## **Findings**

### ***Teacher's reflection***

In Workshop 1, the teacher (or author) observed that students' search results with ChatGPT were more informative when using detailed prompts. While students may have recognized the importance of using appropriate prompts, ChatGPT's extensive information still required supplementation with more standardized knowledge of the field. This highlights ChatGPT's complementary role in the classroom, rather than serving as a replacement for human instruction.

In Workshop 2, many students opted to have ChatGPT translate the text instead of translating it themselves and then using ChatGPT for evaluation. This revealed a tendency to rely on ChatGPT when given freedom of choice, highlighting the need for more structured class activities to encourage students to practice their translation skills. Additionally, some students lacked the critical thinking skills needed to assess the accuracy of ChatGPT's translations, showing an over-reliance on its output. Since translation evaluation is a complex process requiring deep knowledge, it is recommended that ChatGPT be used for evaluation only after students have gained sufficient translation training to effectively assess ChatGPT's translations.

### ***Students' Reflection***

Shoufan (2023) highlighted the significance of investigating students' experience in using ChatGPT and their perceptions of it. The author explained that students' perceptions can greatly impact their motivation, engagement, and performance. While positive attitudes can promote students' eagerness to learn and their academic achievement, negative viewpoints of ChatGPT can lead to disengagement, demotivation, and little chance of academic success. Therefore, students' perceptions of ChatGPT use in translation teaching can give a more profound statement of the efficacy of ChatGPT in translation teaching.

After the workshop, most students said that they used ChatGPT to check the meaning of vocabulary and specialized words that were difficult to understand. ChatGPT could list the meanings and definitions of unknown words. "ChatGPT can present in detail the meanings of a word and its possible translations,



providing some contextual clues to the understanding of the word”, as cited by a student. Another student showed satisfaction with ChatGPT when they compared ChatGPT’s explanation of meanings with results from other tools: “It can provide many translation choices for a word immediately, with more advanced word choices than ordinary dictionaries”.

In addition to using ChatGPT to understand text features (including vocabulary, grammar, and topic), the students used ChatGPT to revise their translations. ChatGPT was recognised to be a useful tool for students to revise their translations. Expressions or stylistic choices suggested by ChatGPT could be a good source of reference for the students in translation. A student declared: “I learned more about ChatGPT’s wording which seemed better than mine. It has a more academic writing style and creative word choices”.

Although the students acknowledged ChatGPT’s usefulness in their translation process, some expressed dissatisfaction about ChatGPT use. They complained that some information produced by ChatGPT was not quite accurate due to the lack of awareness of the context. Therefore, it was recommended to compare ChatGPT’s results with those found by other search tools as it was not a perfect tool. “We should not allow ChatGPT to do all the translation because it is only a support tool. ChatGPT cannot understand all the meanings conveyed in the text. Therefore, if we have the text translated completely by ChatGPT, the translation may become ‘unnatural’. Chat GPT cannot transfer metaphorical meanings which can be only understood by referring to contextual clues”, cited by a student.

While the students were excited and motivated to have ChatGPT in their translation process, they showed prudence. They proposed that translator students should not depend on ChatGPT’s results involving accuracy and expressions. Instead, they can cross-check with other tools or use effective prompts to produce better translations. They also insisted that the role of human translation should not diminish as humans can help deal with complicated issues related to stylistic and cultural meanings.

## **Conclusion and implications**

The use of ChatGPT in translation classes appears feasible and has shown promising results, with students displaying favorable attitudes toward it. As an easy-to-use tool, ChatGPT supported students throughout the translation process by answering queries related to unfamiliar and complex vocabulary, as well as specialized terms, while also reinforcing their topic-related knowledge. It offered diverse and appropriate target equivalents, making translation more convenient and accessible. Despite some recognized limitations, teachers are encouraged to adopt various strategies to effectively integrate ChatGPT into their translation classes.

### ***Strategies for teachers***

#### ***Setting up the learning environment and learning objectives***

When integrating ChatGPT into the classroom, it is essential for teachers to first prepare the learning environment by explaining the purposes, benefits and drawbacks of using the tool. This involves discussing how ChatGPT can enhance students’ translation skills through interactive exercises in text analysis, translation and translation evaluation. By clearly outlining these benefits, teachers can help students understand the value of this technology and encourage them to engage with it meaningfully.

Teachers should define clear learning objectives when incorporating ChatGPT into their lessons. This includes determining the specific areas such as learning about concepts and knowledge of translation, vocabulary and terminology explanation, translation provision or translation evaluation. Aligning ChatGPT activities with these objectives can help teachers ensure that the use of the tool is purposeful and contributes to the overall learning goals of the course.

#### ***Implementing structured and paired activities***

Providing structured activities and prompts is crucial in guiding students’ use of ChatGPT. Teachers can design tasks that require students to engage with the AI in a controlled manner, such as translating specific

phrases and revising translations. This structured approach helps students stay focused on the learning objectives and ensures that their interactions with ChatGPT are productive.

Incorporating ChatGPT into pair and group activities can foster collaboration and peer learning. For example, students can work together to translate a text, using ChatGPT to assist with vocabulary or grammar. These activities promote communication and critical thinking while allowing students to benefit from each other's insights.

### ***Monitoring and Reflection***

Teachers need to monitor students' interactions with ChatGPT and provide timely feedback. Observing how students use the tool can enable teachers to identify areas where additional support is needed and offer guidance on improving their translation skills. Feedback can be given on both the efficiency of students' work and their approach to using the technology.

Allocating time for reflection is essential in helping students assess their experiences with ChatGPT. Teachers can facilitate discussions or assign reflective writing tasks where students consider what they learned from using the tool, how it contributed to their language development, and what challenges they encountered. This process helps reinforce learning and provides insights for future lessons.

### ***Ethical concerns***

Teachers and learners are encouraged to have a balanced and responsible integration of AI into translation teaching and learning to maintain data privacy, reduce bias and avoid overreliance on technology. In terms of data privacy, students and instructors should be informed about how their data (input, output, and metadata) is collected, stored, and used by AI tools. Data entered into AI tools should be anonymized to protect individuals' identities, particularly in translation tasks involving sensitive or personal content. To mitigate bias, educators should raise students' awareness of bias in ChatGPT-generated translations and enhance their critical thinking when evaluating cultural elements in its translations, comparing them with human translations and considering the social, cultural, and historical context of language use.

Ultimately, it is important to avoid excessive independence on ChatGPT and balance its use with human interaction. Teachers should highlight the complementary role of ChatGPT, emphasizing that the human role remains essential for translation and translation refinement. AI should assist in repetitive or labor-intensive tasks, allowing students to focus on creative and nuanced aspects of translation. For example, structured exercises may allow students to evaluate and refine ChatGPT's outputs critically. Furthermore, instructors should warn students about the risks of over-reliance on AI, which may lead to diminished proficiency in translation skills and language knowledge. Therefore, students should be taught basic translation skills before AI is introduced into the translation class.

It is also important for students to understand the functions, strengths and limitations of the tool to use it responsibly. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their final translation products regardless of the tools used. Teachers must ensure all students have access to the tool and take into account disparities in versions to avoid the digital divide among students. Lastly, teachers and students should stay updated on advancements in AI, emphasizing their life-long learning ability and adaptability to new tools and practices.

### ***Recommendations for future studies***

This study was limited to an application of ChatGPT in an advanced translation course at a university in Vietnam. To fully investigate the role of ChatGPT in translation and translation learning, future research could explore the use of ChatGPT in various translation courses and institutions in many parts of the world. Furthermore, longitudinal studies are needed to observe the long-term impact of ChatGPT on students' translation skills and professional development, providing deeper insights into ChatGPT's effectiveness and sustainability.

## Acknowledgements

The research is funded by the University of Foreign Language Studies, the University of Da Nang, Viet Nam.

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