

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, LEARNING AUTONOMY AND LEARNING LOSS: A REFLECTION ON THE CONCEPTS AND EVIDENCE FROM ELT FIELD

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Abstract

Research has outlined numerous factors which contribute to academic success. Of those factors, student engagement and learning autonomy are considered pivotal in promoting successful learning. Student engagement is an intertwined construct which includes behavioral, emotional and cognitive dimensions. Engagement promotes students' academic performance or learning outcomes, contributes to students' well-being, and minimizes the emergence of negative behaviours and the risks of dropping out. Meanwhile, autonomy in learning concerns the ability of students to take charge of their own learning. This would enable them to foster lifelong learning in the long run. These two concepts have become critical issues especially during the pandemic whereby the limited opportunities of learners to interact directly with their teachers and peers have compelled them to become more independent in the acquisition of knowledge and skills and their engagement to the school and lessons is viewed as deteriorating. The school closure and distant learning have also been blamed for causing learning loss on students. Many have claimed that students experience loss of academic knowledge and skills because of being away too long from school, which in fact is still debatable. This paper aims at revisiting those important concepts in relation to ELT specifically in higher education. Additionally, it also endeavors to describe and reflect on the students' learning experiences in whilst and post pandemic with the hopes to yield quality learning in the next normal era.

Keywords: ELT, learning autonomy, learning loss, student engagement