ACADEMIC MOTIVATION AND LEARNER EMPOWERMENT ON LEARNING PROGRESS IN ENGLISH OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: This study examined the relationship between academic motivation and learner empowerment on learning progress in English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) of Senior High School students. Using a descriptive-correlational research design, the study employed three standardized questionnaires. One hundred twenty (127) Grade 12 Senior High School students enrolled in a public secondary school in District 5, Division of Valencia City, Bukidnon, Philippines participated in the study. Statistical treatments, including Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and regression analysis, were utilized to examine the relationships between the three variables. The results show that academic engagement and learner empowerment of learners in EAPP affect their learning progress. Further, findings indicate that self-efficacy, decision-making, and engagement are the predictor variables of learning progress.

I. INTRODUCTION

Understanding students' perceived learning is essential, as it serves as a critical indicator of educational effectiveness and student engagement. Perceived learning, termed in this study as learning progress, refers to a student's subjective assessment of their knowledge and understanding of a specific topic, reflecting self-reported gains in learning (Alqurashi, 2018). Navarro et al. (2024) stressed that the learning progress of students – how they think about and feel about their learning experiences – tells a lot about their academic journeys. Research shows that learning progress significantly impacts academic outcomes and student satisfaction. Wendt and Nisbet (2015) found that students' perceptions of their learning experiences were closely linked to their course grades, suggesting that how students view their learning can influence academic performance.

The factors influencing students' learning progress are multifaceted, with academic motivation playing a significant role in shaping their educational experiences. Academic motivation, defined as the internal drive or desire that propels students to engage in academic activities encompasses intrinsic motivation, where students pursue learning for personal satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation, which involves external rewards or pressures (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023). Research indicates that academically motivated students are more likely to perceive school and learning as valuable, leading to higher levels of engagement and achievement. Rosenzweig, Wigfield, & Eccles (2019) found that students with strong academic motivation tend to invest greater effort in their studies, which correlates with improved academic outcomes. Similarly, Lazowski and Hulleman (2016) highlighted that a positive motivational climate enhances students' perceptions of their learning experiences. Scholars also posited that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations favorably influence academic performance (Diseth, Mathisen, & Samdal 2020; Froiland, 2021), while others emphasized how enjoyment from academic activities encourages persistence and resilience among students (Martin, 2006).

In addition to academic motivation, learner empowerment also plays a crucial role in shaping students' perceived learning outcomes. This concept emphasizes the degree to which students feel they have control over their learning processes, including autonomy, self-efficacy, and the ability to make choices regarding their educational paths (Shrader, 2003; Brunton & Jeffrey, 2014). Empowered learners are more likely to take ownership of their education, leading to enhanced engagement and positive perceptions of their learning experiences. Daggöl (2020) found a positive correlation between feelings of empowerment and learning progress among high school students. The study concluded that higher levels of empowerment were associated with increased motivation, which subsequently enhanced perceived learning. When students are empowered, they are not only more engaged but also more invested in their educational journeys, making informed decisions that reflect their interests and goals.

However, Anwar and Wardhono (2019) found that while motivation plays a role in engagement, students' perceptions of learning experiences in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) do not always correlate strongly with perceived learning outcomes. These contradictions point to in-depth investigations in EAP instruction; thus, a study on academic motivation and learner empowerment as key factors influencing students' learning progress in English is desirably needed. Calixton and Mascuñana (2019) asserted that studies concerning English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP), as an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course, offer curriculum designers avenues to reflect on the effectiveness of the curriculum in preparing Senior High School (SHS) students for their future careers. EAPP, an applied subject in Philippine Senior High Schools, is offered to equip learners with knowledge and skills in academic and research writing to help them fare in higher education and the professional workplace (Department of Education, 2013).

The study aimed to investigate the relationship between academic motivation and learner empowerment on the learning progress of Senior High School students in English for Academic and Professional Purposes at a Philippine public secondary school for SY 2024-2025. By investigating these relationships, this research aimed to contribute to the knowledge of how educators can revolutionize teaching practices and improve student engagement and success in English language education.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study examined the relationship between academic motivation and learner empowerment on learning progress in English for Academic and Professional Purposes of Senior High School students. Specifically, it sought to:

1. determine the level of academic motivation Senior High School students have in terms of:
    a. intrinsic motivation
    b. extrinsic motivation, and
    c. self-efficacy motivation;
2. ascertain the level of learner empowerment Senior High School students experience in the following aspects:
    a. decision-making,
    b. engagement, and
    c. self-efficacy;
3. assess the level of the learning progress of the Senior High School students in English in terms of:
    a. individual learning processes,
    b. learning outcomes, and
    c. collaboration;
4. correlate Senior High School students' learning progress and:
    a. academic motivation and
    b. learner empowerment in English; and
5. identify if there is any variable, singly or in combination, that best predicts the Senior High School students' learning progress in English.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between academic motivation, learner empowerment, and learning progress in English for Academic and Professional Purposes among Senior High School students. The descriptive approach utilized mean scores to quantify and summarize the levels of academic motivation and learner empowerment among the respondents. The correlational aspect statistically analyzed the association between academic motivation, learner empowerment, and learning progress. This design provided a comprehensive understanding of the variables and their potential relationships without experimental manipulation, offering empirical insights to guide educational strategies.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at a public secondary school in District 5, Division of Valencia City, Bukidnon, Philippines. This institution was selected as the research locale due to the researcher's professional engagement as an English for Academic and Professional Purposes teacher for Senior High School students, ensuring familiarity with the academic environment and facilitating access to accurate and relevant data. This strategic choice allowed for the efficient collection of data and the contextualization of findings within the rural school setting.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The total population of 127 Grade 12 Senior High School students enrolled for the first semester of SY 2024-2025 participated in the study. These respondents come from the different strands: Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) and Humanities and the Social Sciences (HUMSS) of the Academic Track, and Agri-Fishery Arts (AFA), Home Economics (HE), and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) of the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track. The purposive inclusion of the total population ensured a diverse representation of gender, academic affiliation, and academic performance. Most of the respondents' mother tongue is Bisaya; English, their second language. They spent four (4) hours a week studying the applied subject EAPP.

2.4 Research Instruments

Three (3) standardized structured survey questionnaires were used in the study. These instruments underwent content validation by three experts and a pilot study to ensure their effectiveness and reliability. The questionnaire on academic motivation, patterned from the study of Urhahne and Wijnia (2023), comprised three sub-variables: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy motivation. Each sub-variable included eight indicators, with responses rated using a five-point Likert scale. The instrument demonstrated high reliability, evidenced by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .945.

The scale on learner empowerment, based on the study of Titus and Muttungal (2023), is composed of three sub-variables: decision-making, engagement, and self-efficacy. Each sub-variable included eight indicators, with responses rated using a five-point Likert scale. The instrument demonstrated high reliability, evidenced by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .963.

The survey questionnaire on learning progress, based on the study of Gaffas (2023) and Hoque (2016), also comprised three sub-variables: individual learning processes, learning outcomes, and collaboration. Each sub-variable included eight indicators, with responses rated using a five-point Likert scale. The instrument demonstrated high reliability, evidenced by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .970. These three questionnaires were constructed in light of the Department of Education's (2013) curriculum guide in English for Academic and Professional Purposes.

2.5 Data Gathering

The conduct of the study took place in November 2024. A communication letter that explicated the purpose of the research was endorsed to the School Head. Once approved at the administrative level, small groups with the student respondents were conducted to elaborate on the contents of the letter of informed consent concerning the objectives and nature of the study, collection and treatment of data, and rights of the respondents in the research. The standardized survey questionnaires were administered after the students agreed to participate in the study. These were retrieved after all students were done answering. The responses were tallied in Microsoft Excel and analyzed statistically to obtain the mean of students' academic motivation, learner empowerment, and learning progress in EAPP. Interpretations, implications, and conclusions were drawn for an objective understanding of the results concerning the relationships of the three variables.

2.4 Statistical Analysis

To ensure the clear and accurate computation and interpretation of the data, the research employed various statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics, particularly the mean, were used to determine the levels of academic engagement, learner empowerment, and learning progress. Additionally, to examine the relationships between the three variables, inferential statistics, including Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Regression Analysis, were utilized.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Academic Motivation of Senior High School Students

Table 1 presents the results of academic motivation in all components among Senior High School students. The overall mean score of 4.12, with a descriptive rating of "Very often" and a qualitative interpretation of "Highly motivated," indicates that Senior High School students are consistently driven in English for Academic and Professional Purposes.

Table 1. Summary of the level of academic motivation of senior high school students

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION
1. Intrinsic Motivation	4.29	Very often	Highly motivated
2. Self-efficacy Motivation	4.09	Very often	Highly motivated
3. Extrinsic Motivation	3.99	Very often	Highly motivated
OVERALL MEAN	4.12	Very often	Highly motivated

Legend:

Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Always	Very highly motivated
3.51-4.50	Very often	Highly motivated
2.51-3.50	Often	Moderately motivated
1.51-2.50	Sometimes	Poorly motivated
1.00-1.50	Rarely	Very poorly motivated

Among the three types of motivation, intrinsic motivation ranks highest at 4.29, showing that students are deeply engaged and find personal value in their learning. These results are consistent with the findings of Howard et al. (2017), which claimed that intrinsic motivation has a strong connection to academic success. Self-efficacy motivation follows at 4.09, reflecting students' confidence in their abilities, as highlighted by Sitzmann and Yeo (2013), who reported its positive relationship with academic performance, and Talsma et al. (2018), who linked self-efficacy to persistence and effort during challenging tasks. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation, with a score of 3.99, demonstrates that external rewards and expectations remain significant. Howard et al. (2021) found that identified regulation enhances academic achievement when external goals are internalized. These results indicate that students demonstrate a balanced and strong motivation to excel in EAPP.

3.2 Learner Empowerment of Senior High School Students

Table 2 presents the results of learner empowerment in all components among Senior High School students. The overall mean score of 3.95, with a descriptive rating of "Very often" and a qualitative interpretation of "Highly empowered," suggests that Senior High School students frequently demonstrate empowerment in key academic areas such as self-efficacy, decision-making, and engagement.

Table 2. Summary of the level of learner empowerment of senior high school students

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION
1. Self-efficacy	3.99	Very often	Highly empowered
2. Decision-making	3.98	Very often	Highly empowered
3. Engagement	3.88	Very often	Highly empowered
OVERALL MEAN	3.95	Very often	Highly empowered

Legend:

Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Always	Very highly empowered
3.51-4.50	Very often	Highly empowered
2.51-3.50	Often	Moderately empowered
1.51-2.50	Sometimes	Poorly empowered
1.00-1.50	Rarely	Very poorly empowered

Self-efficacy, with a mean score of 3.99, indicates that students frequently have confidence in their ability to succeed academically, reflecting a strong sense of self-belief. Titus and Muttungal (2023) found that self-efficacy is a critical factor in empowering learners, as it enhances their capacity to set and achieve personal goals. Moreover, decision-making, with a mean score of 3.98, reflects students' regular confidence in making decisions about their academic activities, demonstrating autonomy and active participation in their learning. Cleary et al. (2020) emphasized that decision-making skills are vital in fostering academic empowerment, as they allow students to take control of their learning paths and outcomes. Similarly, engagement, with a mean score of 3.88, shows that students frequently feel involved in their learning process, although slightly less often compared to the other indicators. Kirk et al. (2016) noted that sustained engagement requires interactive and supportive learning environments that align with student interests and learning goals.

3.3 Learning Progress of Senior High School Students

Table 3 presents the results of learning progress in all components among Senior High School students. The overall mean score of 3.94, with a descriptive rating of "Very often" and a qualitative interpretation of "Highly capable," suggests that Senior High School students generally feel confident and engaged in their learning processes. It indicates a positive learning environment where students are actively participating and perceiving significant academic growth.

Table 3. Summary of the level of learning progress of senior high school students

INDICATORS	MEAN	DESCRIPTIVE RATING	QUALITATIVE INTERPRETATION
1. Individual Learning Processes	3.95	Very often	Highly capable
2. Collaboration	3.94	Very often	Highly capable
3. Learning Outcomes	3.93	Very often	Highly capable
OVERALL MEAN	3.94	Very often	Highly capable

Legend:

Range	Descriptive Rating	Qualitative Interpretation
4.51-5.00	Always	Very highly capable
3.51-4.50	Very often	Highly capable
2.51-3.50	Often	Moderately capable
1.51-2.50	Sometimes	Poorly capable
1.00-1.50	Rarely	Very poorly capable

The indicator individual learning processes, with a mean score of 3.95, reflects that students frequently take ownership of their learning and feel empowered in managing their academic tasks. This aligns with Gaffas (2023), who emphasized that self-regulated learning environments enhance student autonomy and effective learning management. The indicator collaboration, with a mean score of 3.94, highlights the value of teamwork and group activities in enhancing learning outcomes. Salam and Farooq (2020) similarly noted that collaborative learning fosters deeper understanding and skill development through active interaction and teamwork. The indicator learning outcome, with a score of 3.93, suggests that while students are engaged, some may feel their efforts have yet to fully translate into tangible results. According to Adarkwah (2021), structured feedback and targeted assessments are critical for ensuring that students' engagement translates into improved academic performance, particularly in online and blended learning environments.

3.4 Correlation of Academic Motivation, Learner Empowerment, and Learning Progress

Table 4 presents the correlation analysis between academic motivation, learner empowerment, and learning progress among senior high school students.

Table 4. Correlation analysis between academic motivation, learner empowerment, and learning progress of senior high school students

VARIABLES	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	PROBABILITY
Academic Motivation	.731	.000**
Intrinsic Motivation	.302	.001**
Extrinsic Motivation	.607	.000**
Self-efficacy Motivation	.767	.000**
Learner Empowerment	.657	.000**
Individual Learning Processes	.910	.000**
Learning Outcomes	.180	.043*
Collaboration	.185	.034*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
b. Listwise N=127

Academic motivation shows a strong positive correlation with learning progress (r = .731, p < .000), indicating that higher academic motivation is associated with better learning outcomes. The subcomponents of academic motivation also show significant relationships with learning progress: intrinsic motivation (r = .302, p < .001), extrinsic motivation (r = .607, p < .000), and self-efficacy motivation (r = .767, p < .000), all contributing positively to students' learning progress. These findings align with the study of Solhaug (2009), who highlights that motivation, particularly intrinsic and extrinsic, is crucial for student engagement and academic success. The strong correlation between academic motivation and learning progress also supports the findings of Zimmerman et al. (2018), who argue that self-efficacy and motivation significantly enhance students' ability to achieve academic goals by fostering persistence and effort in challenging tasks.

Moreover, learner empowerment also demonstrates a significant positive correlation with learning progress (r = .657, p < .000). Among its subcomponents, individual learning processes show the strongest relationship (r = .910, p < .000), suggesting that students who take responsibility for their learning make the most progress. Learning outcome and collaboration also show positive, though weaker, correlations (r = .180, p = .043) and (r = .185, p = .034), respectively, indicating that while these factors are positively related to learning progress, their influence is less pronounced compared to individual learning processes. The study's findings support Titus and Muttungal (2023), who stress that students who are given the autonomy to take charge of their learning are more likely to experience success. Ryan and Deci (2020) further reinforce this, noting that empowering students with decision-making power over their learning leads to higher motivation and better academic outcomes.

3.5 Predictor variables of learning progress

Table 5 presents the regression analysis results examining the impact of academic motivation and learner empowerment on learning progress. The model shows that both self-efficacy motivation and learner empowerment significantly contribute to learning progress, with the overall model being highly significant (F = 147.880, p < .000), and explaining 88.1% of the variance in learning progress (R² = .881).

Table 5. Regression analysis on learning progress

Coefficients					
	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.553	.195		2.827	.006
Academic Motivation					
Self-efficacy motivation	.090	.045	.105	2.008	.047
Learner Empowerment					
Decision-making	.641	.044	.874	14.455	.000
Engagement	.171	.027	.228	6.442	.000

R = 0.939   R² = .881   F= 147.880   Prob = 0.000

The self-efficacy motivation indicator has a positive and significant effect on learning progress, with an unstandardized coefficient of .090 (B = .090, p = .047). This indicates that for every one-unit increase in self-efficacy motivation, learning progress increases by 0.090, after controlling for other variables. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.105) shows a moderate impact on learning progress.

In terms of learner empowerment, both decision-making and engagement were significant predictors of learning progress. Decision-making (B = .641, p < .000) had the strongest impact, with a standardized coefficient of .874, suggesting that for every unit increase in decision-making, learning progress increases by 0.641. The high standardized coefficient for decision-making indicates its substantial contribution to the model. Similarly, engagement (B = .171, p < .000) also showed a significant positive effect, with a standardized coefficient of .228, indicating a moderate effect on learning progress. From the preceding analysis, the

equation can be used in predicting learning progress (Y), as indicated by the F=value (147.880), with its corresponding probability (0.000) being significant at level $p<0.05$. This model is illustrated:

$$Y= .553+ 0.090X_1 + 0.641X_2 + 0.171X_3$$

Where: Y= Learning Progress

.553 is constant

X_1= Self-efficacy motivation

X_2= Decision-making

X_3= Engagement

Therefore, the null hypothesis, which stated that there are no variables, singly or in combination, that best predicts the learning progress among senior high school students in EAPP classes was rejected.

The findings of the study agree to the study of Zimmerman et al. (2018) who found that self-efficacy, a core component of academic motivation, plays a crucial role in students' ability to persist in challenging tasks and improve their academic performance. Further, it is in alignment to the study of Titus and Muttungal (2023) emphasize that self-efficacy is a key motivator for academic success, suggesting that students who believe in their own abilities are more likely to engage in productive learning behaviors and achieve better results.

Moreover, Jong (2017) emphasized the critical role of learner empowerment, specifically through decision-making, in fostering student success. Further, Listiana et al. (2016) highlight that learner empowerment, particularly through decision-making, plays a crucial role in student engagement and academic outcomes. Their research supports the strong impact of decision-making found in the regression analysis, where students who have autonomy over their learning decisions show better academic performance.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The senior high school students in the English for Academic and Professional Purposes program demonstrate high levels of academic engagement and learner empowerment. The students exhibit strong motivation across intrinsic, extrinsic, and self-efficacy dimensions, which reflects their commitment to their educational pursuits. The findings also indicate that these students possess significant empowerment in areas such as decision-making and engagement, further enhancing their learning experience. While there may not be a direct significant relationship between these factors and learning progress, self-efficacy, decision-making, and engagement serve as key predictor variables. This suggests that fostering these aspects of learner empowerment can positively influence students' learning outcomes in EAPP.

These findings underscore the importance of creating an educational environment that promotes high levels of motivation and empowerment among students. Enhancing motivation by incorporating teaching strategies that connect the course material to students' personal interests and real-life applications could be considered an effective approach. Providing regular feedback and creating opportunities for students to set and achieve personal learning goals might also help support self-efficacy, as the study revealed a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy motivation and learning progress. It may also be beneficial to incorporate more interactive and collaborative activities in the classroom to further boost student engagement. The study highlighted a positive relationship between engagement and learning progress, suggesting that such activities could encourage more active participation in the learning process. Next, promoting decision-making autonomy might be a helpful strategy, as decision-making was identified as a strong predictor of learning progress. Allowing students to have a voice in their learning decisions could foster a greater sense of ownership and improve their academic performance. Lastly, encouraging collaborative learning through group work and peer discussions might positively influence the learning experience, as collaboration was also found to have a beneficial impact on learning progress.

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