



An Investigation of the EFL College Students' Engagement Dimensions, Levels, and Factors

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Abstract

Insufficient student engagement in EFL classes is one of the serious and major challenges not only for novice teachers but also for experienced ones. It could cause disruptive behaviours and eventually decrease the learning opportunity on the part of students.

This study attempts to discover the extent of the students' engagement dimensions and levels. Additionally, it seeks to discover the prevalent factors that cause the students' disengagement and those that promote and maintain the students' engagement level. The current study is restricted to 129 students of the English Department at College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University-Erbil in the academic year 2021-2022. A questionnaire and interview were employed to collect quantitative and qualitative data consecutively.

The study results demonstrated that students practise engagement dimensions unevenly. In addition, the study showed that students practise engagement levels at different rates. Furthermore, it revealed the most common factors causing the students' disengagement and those promoting and maintaining their engagement. Finally, some recommendations are put forward.

Keywords: EFL Student Engagement, Engagement Levels and Dimensions, Engagement and Disengagement Factors.

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student engagement is one of the crucial issues that has been discussed and researched for many decades. John Dewey, a famous educator, deeply investigated student engagement at the beginning of 1920's who attempted to find out the reasons of boredom and disengagement in the schools (Ali and Hassan, 2018). After that, Alexander Astin devoted his work to student engagement, basically named 'involvement'. His definition to 'involvement' was "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (Astin, 1984, p. 518).

Many scholars show that lack of student engagement (i.e., disengagement) is one of the teachers' ongoing challenges in the 21st century. Teachers continuously struggle with it and how to tackle it (Fredricks, et al., 2016).

2. DEFINITION OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student engagement is a significant area related to psychological education. However, there is no agreement on defining the concept of 'student engagement', it can be defined as the desire, need, and encouragement of students in the learning process (Ciric and Jovanovic, 2016). Furthermore, it also implies devoting time by students to educational activities and having participation willingly (Gunuc, 2014). In a similar vein, its definition can involve students' demonstration of their readiness to integrate into the class activities such as attending class, completing the task, listening to the teacher, and being obedient (Werang and Leba, 2022).



Furthermore, student engagement can include participation in non-educational activities outside the class (Subramainan and Mahmoud, 2020). They also claim that student engagement is beyond participation in academic and social activities since students must be involved emotionally and cognitively (Subramainan and Mahmoud, 2020).

In addition to the explanations and definitions of student engagement, there is a broader definition of the term denoting sustainably involving students or investing their highest attention to the lesson in terms of several elements such as psychological, affective, cognitive, behavioural, physical, and intellectual components (Mandernach, 2015).

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Engaging students in education plays a crucial role in the life and experience of college students, including:

Student engagement and job opportunity: It has been suggested that university graduates should have some capabilities and skills such as problem-solving, academic analysis, and knowledge to be qualified to find their place in the labour market and get an appropriate job in this busy and competitive world. This is not likely to be achieved if the students are not fully involved in the lessons and fail to keep full engagement cognitively and emotionally. Thus, it is impossible to reach the skills and potentials (Pickford, 2016). Additionally, Radloff & Coates (2010) believe that student engagement leads to acquiring knowledge and skills which are essential for having a job.

Student engagement and quality of learning: Student engagement can considerably enhance the quality of learning and deep learning, improve quality assurance, and influence student diligence (Mandernach, 2015). Therefore, it can support students' positive feeling and targeted learning outcomes (Subramainan and Mahmoud, 2020).

Student engagement and students' behaviour: If education can put student engagement on the right track, students can academically and emotionally achieve more knowledge and skills that make students feel happy, become a more active and better citizen, consider themselves as an important part of the learning community, and increase the sense of responsibility that has an impact on their entire lives (Murray, et al., 2004). This leads them not to leave the school or university, to stick to the class and school regulations, and to be far away from any troublesome act (Fredricks and McColskey, 2012). By focusing on student engagement, they feel the responsibility. This, many serious issues related to classroom management will be sorted out successfully, such as the abnormal noise made during students in class (Youcef, 2016).

Student engagement and pleasurable atmosphere: It is believed that student engagement can build a friendly and enjoyable learning environment (Sáenz, et al., 2011). Engagement can bring about and promote complete students' integration to social, emotional, academic and behavioural components. In other words, it can possibly prevent students from any harmful disconnections and conditions (Sáenz, et al., 2011). There is always a gap between classroom management and discipline where engagement comes to play its role as a mediator to fill in this gap and gain tremendous student satisfaction and higher attainment (Sáenz, et al., 2011). Apart from learning values and education, engagement is supportive and beneficial for universities and schools because it can enhance them concerning fame. That is how universities will be increasingly and widely recognised. They can also use this achievement for promoting the status of institution (Trowler, 2010).

Student engagement and academic success: Abla and Fraumeni (2019) states that engagement is beyond the reflection of educational success since it can intensively be an integral part of it and maximise effectiveness. Additionally, it has been researched that if



students are engaged in their study, they can have pleasant and valuable experience in which students can eventually perform better and gain higher marks (Abla and Fraumeni, 2019). Besides, De Villiers and Werner (2016) highlight the significance of student engagement on achieving considerable academic success and improving their performance level.

4. DIMENSIONS OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Student engagement is not merely about involvement and participation, but rather holistically understood to be comprised of several dimensions. DeVito (2016) states that it includes three main dimensions: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional. In addition, a social dimension has been recently added to the group too (Bergdahl 2020). These dimensions include both class and outdoor activities (Gunuc, 2014).

Behavioural engagement dimension can be observed through performance, activities and tasks in the class; therefore, it is the most common type of engagement to be measured (Bowden, et al., 2021). This engagement type reveals the extent to which students actively participate in activities considered important for academic achievement, such as attending the lessons, taking notes, and answering questions (Bergdahl, 2020). It also includes performing very well in the class, following the institution regulations and class rules, and avoiding troublesome behaviour (Subramainan and Mahmoud, 2020).

Emotional engagement dimension demonstrates the extent of students' interests, attitudes, reactions, willingness, enjoyment, "sense of belonging", and learning values (Fredricks, et al., 2016). Moreover, highly emotionally engaged students are usually enthusiastic, optimistic, delighted, open, curious, and confident (Bowden, et al., 2021). In other words, students who are less engaged emotionally they have negative emotions such as sadness and anxiety (Wakefield, 2016). In this regard, this sort of engagement has a great influence on the other dimensions: When it is positive, it can increase the level of behavioural and cognitive engagement too (Gunuc, 2014).

Cognitive engagement dimension shows the extent that students are willingly ready to learn, dedicate their energy, expend considerable effort to think, understand, and reflect upon the tasks, analyse ideas (DeVito, 2016) and keep a careful attention span on the lesson (Bergdahl, 2020). In other words, surface or deep learning, and understanding concepts are emphasized (Bowden, et al., 2021). Furthermore, being initiative (Wakefield, 2016), resilient, persistent, and thoughtful are some indications of having high cognitive dimension (Gibbs and Poskitt, 2010). Cognitively engaged students can also know their learning needs and how the information is useful or meaningful in the real world (Gunuc, 2014). Thus, a significant relationship is perceived between cognitive engagement and learning motivation.

Social engagement dimension is a broad term for being involved in a community, interacting with other members, and feeling connected to a larger group (Forgeard, 2022). This dimension is about academic and non-academic collaboration among learners and involvement in different communities and groups (Bergdahl, 2020).

Many scholars believe that although they are different engagement dimensions, they are somehow interrelated (Gibbs and Poskitt, 2010; Davis, et al., 2012).

5. LEVELS OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Students generally have several engagement levels. In this regard, Schlechty (2002, cited in Mekki, et al., 2022) outlines five levels of student engagement, ordered below from the highest to the lowest, in a clear framework to demonstrate the depth of engagement among students based on two principal concepts—'attention and commitment':

Authentic engagement: As the highest level of engagement, students are deeply involved in the class work, tasks, and activities. Besides, the tasks and activities are meaningful,



interesting, and valuable for the students due to intrinsic motivation. Accordingly, learning happens very well since students work enthusiastically and diligently, and are fully committed and attentive (Mekki, et al., 2022).

Ritual compliance: This is regarded as the second top level where students are engaged in the class work, tasks, and activities due to extrinsic motivation, such as gaining high marks. Moreover, the classwork, tasks, and activities are to some extent meaningful, interesting, and valuable. Thus, learning happens sufficiently (Mekki, et al., 2022). Heick (2018) indicates that his high-level students in the class seemed to be around the 'Ritual Compliance' level.

Passive compliance: Students are engaged in the class work, tasks, and activities in order to avoid harmful results such as failing in the course. Additionally, students find the tasks and activities slightly meaningful or even meaningless. Therefore, learning might happen insufficiently in the class (Mekki, et al., 2022).

Retreatism: Students are not engaged in the class work, tasks, and activities because they might be distracted; for instance, by using smartphones. The students do not try to conform to the class activities, but they do not cause trouble to others. Learning does not possibly happen since students do not have careful attention and have low commitment. There is no or little hardworking, cooperation, and growth on the part of students (Mekki, et al., 2022). Heick (2018) believes that, in his class as a teacher, struggling students were usually in the 'Retreatism' area.

Rebellion: Students are fully disengaged in the class work, tasks, and activities. Besides, they reject to do the classwork, try to do troublemaking acts, have non-academic choices to distract others such as showing different websites on smartphones to others far away. Consequently, learning never happens because students misbehave, distract their own and even others' attention, and lack commitment (Mekki, et al., 2022).

6. FACTORS OF STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT

There are many factors causing student disengagement which can be classified into two categories—college and non-college factors. Non-college factors are divided into three sub-categories, namely 'individual', 'family', and 'social' (Murray, et al. 2004). Individual factors include poor self-esteem, low intelligence, psychological and psychiatric problems, physical ill-health and disability, poor academic performance, repeating a grade, specific learning problems (e.g., poor literacy), behavioural problems, and frequent absence (Ginting, 2021). The second sub-category is 'family factors' embracing large family size, family conflict and abuse, family break-up and the formation of new families, separation from family, parental illness, low economic income, parental unemployment, and educational status of parents (Ali and Hassan, 2018). The third sub-category is social factors which include gender, race or ethnicity, neighbourhood and regional characteristics (e.g., low socio-economic status, remote or rural location), and negative community norms (e.g., prevalence of anti-social behaviour) (Günüç and Kuzu, 2014).

College factors can be divided into two sub-categories which are 'college environment factors' and 'class environment factors. College environment factors usually include college management, size, disciplinary climate, social climate (e.g., tolerance of diversity, and prevalence of bullying), staff workload, and their relationships to one another. The latter sub-category is related to class environment which involves class size, access to learning resources, student-teacher relations, peer relations, professional teaching staff, teacher commitment, teacher planning and behaviours, curriculum/ coursebook, teaching activities, and assessment criteria/ practices (Ali and Hassan, 2018; Ginting, 2021).



7. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Due to its educational significance, many scholars and academic centres have conducted research on student engagement in various aspects, including:

In Gunuc's (2014) research on the relationships between student engagement and academic achievement, around three hundred students participated, a questionnaire was used for data collection. The study results found out that there was a close and direct relationship between all dimensions of student engagement, sense of belonging, and academic achievement.

Additionally, Firdaus (2015) carried out a study about the influence of praising students on student engagement. Class observation was used to collect the data. The research findings were that praising students had some positive consequences regarding student engagement such as positive gestures, continuous concentration, oral participation, improving students' confidence, and making the lesson more interesting.

Another study was conducted in Turkey by Cetin (2018) concerning the level of student engagement, and the relationship between the quality of students' environment at university and students' engagement with their classwork. Approximately eight hundred students participated at seven universities, it was revealed that there was a positive correlation between positive university atmosphere and the engagement levels of rebellion and ritual.

In Torto's (2020) study, more than fifty English language teachers in basic schools in Ghana were selected to find out the dimensions of student engagement via using a questionnaire. It was discovered that all the dimensions of engagement were present at different rates, and the emotional dimension was prevailing. The study also found out that poor academic performance and low achievement occurred whenever all dimensions of student engagement were not involved concurrently.

Another study which more than one thousand and a half participants focused on the factors contributing to the levels of student engagement in online courses after having, at least, two months of online-course experience (Inder, 2021). It was revealed that six factors had a significant impact on student engagement in online courses, namely *skills, emotional, cognitive, participation, performance engagement* and *value to students*. These factors can assist teachers to enhance the learning experience.

The current study differs from the aforementioned studies because it was conducted in a different context (i.e., at the English department of College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University-Erbil in the academic year 2021-2022). Besides, it primarily deals with three critical issues, namely *student engagement dimensions, levels of student engagement, and factors of student disengagement and those promoting and maintaining student engagement*, whereas none of the previous studies focused on these issues together.

8. METHODOLOGY

8.1. Scope and Participants of the Study

Among 348 students, as the whole population, 129 students were randomly selected as the representative sample who voluntarily participated from all the stages of English Department at College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University-Erbil during the academic year 2021-2022.

8.2. Aims of the Study

This study attempts to reveal the extent of the students' engagement dimensions and levels. In addition, it endeavours to find out the prevalent factors that cause students to lack engagement as well as the factors that promote and maintain the students' engagement level.



8.3. Research Questions

Based on its aims, the current study attempts to respond to the following research questions:

1. Are all engagement dimensions equally practised by the students?
2. What is the extent of the students' engagement levels in their responses to the questionnaire?
3. What are the students' prevalent factors of disengagement?
4. What factors contribute to developing and maintaining the students' engagement level?

8.4 The Study Tools

The data for the current study were collected from the students' questionnaire and interviews. First, a questionnaire was used to qualitatively collect the students' data for answering the first three research questions and then an interview was utilized to qualitatively collect data for responding to the last research question. The questionnaire items were mainly constructed based on the previous studies and cited literature stated in the current study (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire had three sections: The first section dealing with engagement dimensions is comprised of four parts: Each with 10 items highlights a particular dimension, namely 'behavioural', 'emotional', 'cognitive' and 'social' on a scale of five Likert-points [i.e. 'Never'(0), 'Rarely'(1), 'Sometimes'(2), 'Often'(3), 'Always'(4)]. The second section addressing five levels of engagement has six multiple-choice items of single answer, each having five options where each option denotes a distinct feature of each engagement level. The last section representing factors of student disengagement consisted of a single multiple-choice item with 36 multiple-answers to show disengagement factors, Additionally, the interview consisted of six, semi-structured questions intended to show the factors promoting and maintaining the students' engagement level (see Appendix 2, for more details).

8.4.1 Validity of the Tools

The researchers sent the questionnaire and interview to five experts at the university as jury members to check the content validity for both tools, the jury members provided their constructive feedback. After reviewing the experts' comments and modifications, the final version of the questionnaire was distributed to the sample of the study. Then, the answered questionnaires were collected. After that, 30 students were randomly selected from all the stages to be interviewed. Then, they were interviewed and their answers were recorded.

8.4.2 Reliability of the Questionnaire

To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was employed because it is the most widespread type of test used for estimating internal consistency when Likert-scale items are available in a questionnaire. Thus, SPSS Programme (version 25) was run to show the rate of internal consistency of items interrelation which was 0.781, indicating a highly reliable result representing good internal consistency among the items of the questionnaire.

9. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

To answer the first research question (*Are all engagement dimensions equally practised by the students?*), the mean of each dimension was targeted and computed by using descriptive statistics in SPSS¹. Reliant on the mean calculation of each engagement dimension, it was revealed that engagement dimensions were unevenly practised (as shown in Figure 1).

¹ Since the data are normally distributed (checked by SPSS Histogram for each dimension), "the mean score is recommended for scale items" in Likert scale (Sullivan and Artino, 2013, p. 542).

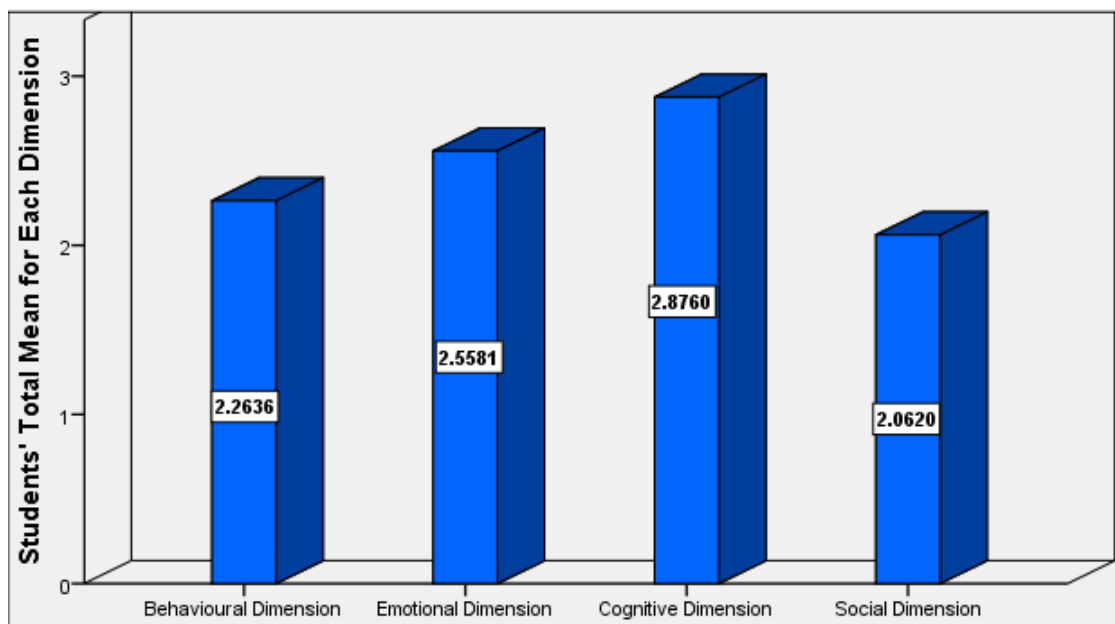


Figure 1: The Mean Score of Each Engagement Dimension in Students' Perceptions

Based on the mean score depicted in Figure 1, all the engagement dimensions have been practised at different rates. This result is in line with the findings of Torto's (2020) study in which the engagement dimensions were different from one another, although the students were highly engaged emotionally in Torto's work.

The present study participants showed that their most highly practised level of engagement is 'cognitive dimension', whereas their least practised level is 'social dimension' among the four dimensions. In other words, the data show that the students have been highly engaged cognitively, but the least engaged socially in their classes. This could be due the fact that the learners usually make enough mental efforts to think critically, understand, and learn new information during their lectures. On the other hand, the output signifies that the students seem to have fewer social interactions in the class which may have occurred through lack of peer and group work activities. This issue needs to be further worked on by instructors so that students can socially engage further in class activities and tasks.

Although both emotional and behavioural dimensions of engagement are moderately practised by the students, these two levels are different from each other: Behavioural dimension is less engaged than the emotional one. This can simply be attributed to students' insufficient note-taking and lack of active participation in class, which were clearly noticed in the results of the questionnaire.

Regarding the answer to the second research question (*What is the extent of the students' engagement levels in their responses to the questionnaire?*), two layers of data processing were used in SPSS: First, the student's data were processed into a 'multiple response set' to create a new variable called 'Engagement Levels'. Then, the percentage was found for each level throughout the data (as depicted in Figure 2).

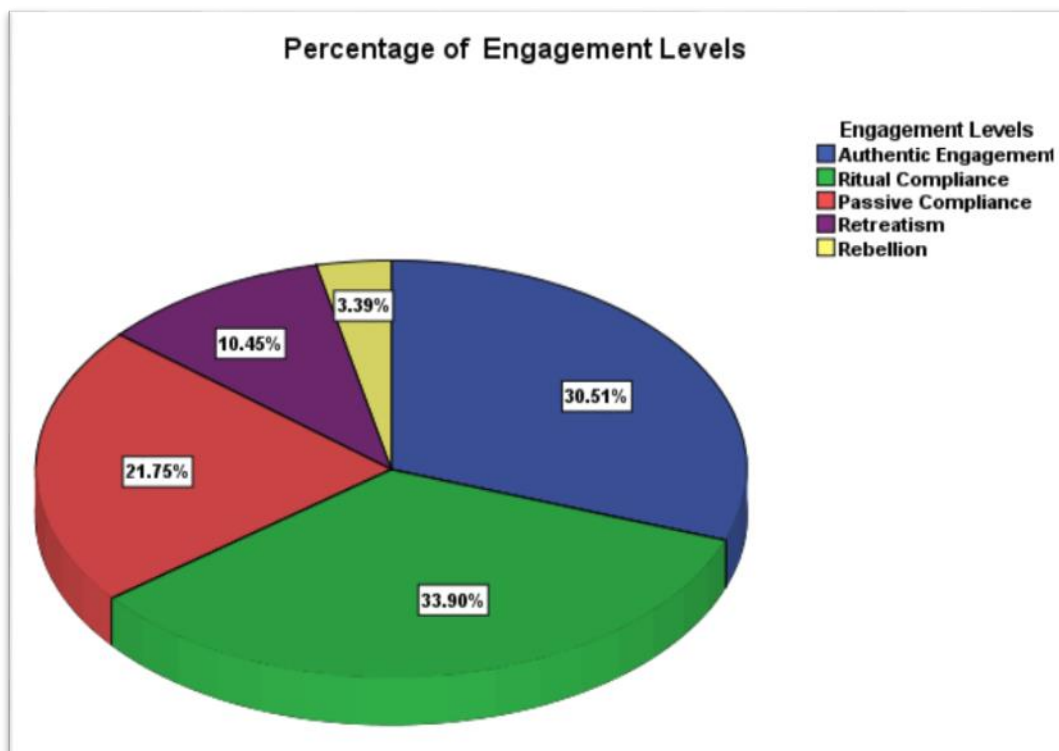


Figure 2: Percentage of Each Engagement Level in Participants’ Responses

Based on the students’ perceptions, the percentage rates of engagement levels shown in Figure 2 indicate that the students have characteristics of all five levels at different rates among which ‘Ritual Compliance’ level (at 33.90%) and ‘Authentic Engagement’ (at 30.51%) have consecutively the highest amounts of engagement which together compose around two thirds (i.e., 64.41%) of the students’ characteristics in relation to engagement levels, whilst ‘Passive Compliance’, ‘Retreatism’, and ‘Rebellion’ levels (scored lower at different rates, 21.75%, 10.45%, and 3.39% successively) make up approximately one-third of the participants’ engagement characteristics (i.e., 35.59 %). To specify: the two-thirds of their engagement characteristics show great signs of deep engagement and motivation which eventually bring about meaningful learning, whereas one third of their engagement features possibly cause serious educational problems as it can cause them to learn insufficiently, disengage themselves from doing class work, and even distract others from doing the classwork. Such problems should be confronted and solved educationally.

To answer the third research question (*What are the students' prevalent factors of disengagement?*), the number and percentage of the students’ responses were considered to reveal the prevalent factors of their disengagement from the learning process. For this purpose, 13 factors were highlighted as the highly regarded causes for their lack of engagement in learning (as manifested in Table 1).



Table 1: Frequencies of Disengagement Factors

Sub-categories	Disengagement Factors	Responses	
		N	Percent
Individual Factors	poor self-esteem	60	3.5%
	low intelligence	48	2.8%
	psychological and psychiatric problems	57	3.3%
	physical ill-health and disability	36	2.1%
	poor academic performance	47	2.8%
	repeating a grade	32	1.9%
	specific learning problems	35	2.1%
	behavioural problems	37	2.2%
	frequent absence	31	1.8%
Family Factors	large family size	59	3.5%
	family conflict and abuse	42	2.5%
	family break-up and the formation of new families	40	2.3%
	separation from family	43	2.5%
	parental illness	41	2.4%
	low economic income	63	3.7%
	parental unemployment	24	1.4%
	educational status of parents	57	3.3%
Social Factors	gender	44	2.6%
	race or ethnicity	31	1.8%
	neighbourhood and regional characteristics (e.g., low socio-economic status, remote or rural location)	61	3.6%
	negative community norms	45	2.6%
College Environment Factors	college management	66	3.9%
	college size	48	2.8%
	disciplinary climate	44	2.6%
	social climate (e.g., tolerance of diversity, and prevalence of bullying)	48	2.8%
	staff workload and their relationships to one another	41	2.4%
Class Environment Factors	class size	71	4.2%
	access to learning resources	39	2.3%
	student-teacher relations	61	3.6%
	peer relations	35	2.1%
	professional teaching staff	62	3.6%
	teacher commitment	34	2.0%
	teacher planning and behaviours	60	3.5%
	curriculum/ course book	39	2.3%
	teaching activities	67	3.9%
	assessment criteria/ practices	58	3.4%
Total		1706	100.0%

Among 36 factors of disengagement, 13 of them were regarded as the most frequent ones dependent upon the results of the students' perceptions (as shown in Table 1). The 13 highly prevalent factors of the students' disengagement were: *poor self-esteem* ($N=60$; 3.5%),



psychological and psychiatric problems (N=57; 3.3%), large family size (N=59; 3.5%), low economic income (N=63; 3.7%), educational status of parents (N=57; 3.3%), neighbourhood and regional characteristics (N=61; 3.6%), college management (N=66; 3.9%), class size (N=71; 4.2%), student-teacher relations (N=61; 3.6%), professional teaching staff (N=62; 3.6%), teacher planning and behaviours (N=60; 3.5%), teaching activities (N=67; 3.9%), and assessment criteria/ practices (N=58; 3.4%). Although all sub-categories contain prevalent disengagement factors at different rates, the highest number of disengagement factors are in 'Class Environment' sub-category where *decisive actions need to be taken educationally to mitigate the negative effects of such factors on the university students' engagement.*

To respond to the fourth research question, (*What factors contribute to developing and maintaining the students' engagement level?*), a semi-structured interview, composed of six questions, was employed to elicit the students' opinions on the factors promoting and maintaining their engagement level, as follows:

Concerning the classes of their most engagement, about three-fourths of students focused on language skills except for reading skill. The rest mentioned various language- and teaching-focused classes. As for the reasons of their highly engaging classes, they referred to '*teachers' character and methodology*', '*activities*', and '*job opportunity*'.

Regarding what deeply engages them in the class, around half of the students stated '*interesting and real-life activities*', whereas the rest provided various expressions, including '*teachers' methodology and character*', '*pair and group work*', and '*active participation*'.

In regard with the question of whether and how motivation encourages their engagement in the class, the participants unanimously agreed that motivation promotes their engagement level, especially when teachers provide '*compliments, marks, support, examples of successful people*', and show '*friendly behaviours*'.

Concerning what usually makes them curious in the class, the students generally said '*new or interesting topics*', and '*teachers' attitude and methodology*' through which their engagement can be promoted because the desire to know, or curiosity, is a significant factor in fostering student engagement.

In the students' responses to whether working alone or in groups is more likely to maintain their engagement level, most of them agreed that group work is more probably to maintain their engagement level due to '*exchanging ideas*', '*understanding activities better*', and '*cooperation*', while only a few of them realized that individual work can possibly keep their level of engagement further.

Regarding what they do to regain their attention after losing it in the class, the students generally mentioned these strategies: '*asking teachers to raise/change their voice*', '*taking notes*', and '*asking questions*'.

Thus, from the students' opinions, it can be noticed that the possible factors promoting and maintaining engagement are: *teachers' voice, character and methodology; classes with promising job opportunities; interesting, real-life, and readily understood activities; cooperation and exchanging ideas in pair and group work; active participation; motivation; and asking questions; and taking notes.*



10. CONCLUSIONS

Engagement is one of the significant issues in EFL classes since learning will not occur without engagement. The results and discussions of the present study reveal that:

Students are most highly engaged cognitively because they are very likely to have had continuous mental efforts to think critically, understand, and learn new information during the class. However, they are least engaged socially owing to students' insufficient interactions which may have occurred through lack of peer and group work activities. Additionally, the students' moderate amount of behavioural dimension could be due to their insufficient individual participation in the class.

Moreover, based on their perceptions, the students showed features of all engagement levels at different rates: 'Ritual Compliance' and 'Authentic Engagement' levels together compose around two-thirds of their engagement features showing deep engagement intended to cause meaningful learning, while 'Passive Compliance', 'Retreatism', and 'Rebellion' levels make up about one-third of their engagement characteristics probably causing serious educational problems, such as students' insufficient learning, disengaging themselves and even distracting others from doing classwork.

Among the students' prevalent factors of disengagement, the class setting factors are emphasized, including *class size, student-teacher relations, professional teaching staff, teacher planning and behaviours, teaching activities, and assessment criteria/practices*.

According to the students' perceptions, the possible factors intended to develop and maintain their engagement level generally are: *teachers' voice, character and methodology; classes with promising job opportunities; interesting, real-life, and readily understood activities; cooperation and exchanging ideas in pair and group work; taking note; active participation; and motivation; asking questions; and taking notes*.

By decreasing factors of disengagement and increasing the factors of better student engagement, teachers can reduce the lower engagement levels, such as 'Passive Compliance', 'Retreatism', and 'Rebellion' which can consequently bring about much higher levels of student engagement.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is highly suggested that university teachers should further engage students socially through providing them with more relationship-building via creating various social outdoor communities as well as game-based activities for peer and group work to increase their social in-class interactions; and behaviourally via encouraging students to sufficiently take notes of useful information and actively participate in the class.

Additionally, instructors should motivate students to connect the classwork to their own experiences and interests; involve them in decisions of what and how to learn; encourage them to teach materials; and engage them in figuring out the problems by getting them to identify and correct mistakes in other students' work. Thus, the learners could be actively and deeply engaged in the learning process, which admittedly results in meaningful learning.

Educational stakeholders should build more lecturing halls at university level to eventually have less students in each class. Furthermore, the instructors need to mitigate the negative effects of large classes on students' engagement by creating small groups in the class, and keeping each student involved in the classwork.

To alleviate instructor-related factors causing disengagement, university teachers should build a great rapport with students and work professionally through thoughtful planning, exemplary behaviours, teaching authentic and interesting activities, and adopting best assessment practices.



Finally, university teachers should promote and maintain students' engagement via *varying their tone of voice* according to the students' mood and need for motivation; *revealing lively character*; *having professional methodology*; *linking the subject with the current labour market*; *designing interesting, authentic, and easily understood activities*; and having students *work in pairs or groups, take notes, and ask questions*.

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Appendix 1
Students’ Questionnaire

Thank you so much for participating in this research project entitled “**An Investigation of the EFL College Students’ Engagement Dimensions, Levels, and Factors.**” at English Department, College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University-Erbil. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of this study.

We greatly appreciate you responding to the questionnaire items.

Section One: Dimensions of Engagement

Please, tick one box for each item to show how often you do each in the class:

[Always (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Rarely (1), Never (0)]

		No	Features of Each Engagement Dimension				
			(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
Behavi	1	I take notes of what I find useful.					
	2	I complete my assignments/tasks on time.					
	3	I participate actively in the class to learn.					



	4	I will not be absent from college/class without a valid reason.					
	5	I do not distract my attention by using my mobile or doing anything else when I am supposed to be paying attention.					
	6	If I don't understand, I start asking questions.					
	7	I am polite toward teachers.					
	8	I follow the rules in the class.					
	9*	When I should do class activities, I pretend to be working.					
	10*	I participate only because of daily assessment.					
Emotional Engagement	11	I enjoy learning new things in the class.					
	12	I think that the classes are interesting.					
	13	I find learning new things encouraging.					
	14	I feel integrated when I am in the class.					
	15	I feel my teachers are competent in their fields.					
	16	I think my courses are beneficial for me.					
	17	I feel excited and energetic when I am in the class.					
	18	I have a sense of belonging.					
	19	I am satisfied with the course.					
	20	The lecture makes me curious.					
Cognitive Engagement	21	I try to understand the material better by relating it to what I already know.					
	22	I revise my class tasks/ activities to make sure they are correct.					
	23	I review my notes regularly, even if a test is not coming up.					
	24	I motivate myself to learn.					
	25	I try to understand how the information could be useful in the real world.					
	26	I spend enough time and make enough effort to learn.					
	27	When I am in class, I ask myself how to remember the new information later.					
	28	If I don't know what a word means while reading, I look it up in the dictionary.					
	29	I think critically in the class.					
	30	I do more than what I am supposed to do in learning.					
Social Engagement	31	I build on others' ideas when I participate in the class.					
	32	I try to understand other students' ideas in class.					
	33	I try to work with others who can help me.					
	34	I try to help others who are struggling in learning.					
	35	I care about other students' ideas in the class.					
	36*	When working with others, I don't share my ideas.					
	37	I like working with classmates.					
	38	I help my classmates accomplish tasks.					
	39	I participate in social activities to experience college life.					
	40	I participate in college activities to show my talents and skills.					

* Items with asterisk are reverse-coded in SPSS because they are negative.

Section Two: Levels of Engagement

Please, tick only one option for each item that best describes you:

Item 1: To what extent are you involved in the class?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I am deeply involved in the class works, tasks, and activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am moderately involved in the class works, tasks, and activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am slightly engaged in the class work, tasks, and activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am not engaged in the class works, tasks, and activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am disengaged and I distract others in the class when doing works, tasks, and activities.



Item 2: How do you find the tasks and activities in the class?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I find the tasks and activities very meaningful, interesting, and valuable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find the tasks and activities fairly meaningful, interesting, and valuable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find the tasks and activities slightly meaningful, interesting, and valuable.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't care whether the tasks and activities are meaningful, interesting, and valuable, or not.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find the tasks and activities boring and truly meaningless.

Item 3: To what extent are you motivated in your learning?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I am fully motivated since I enjoy learning new things.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am motivated to get high marks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am motivated just to pass in the course.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am not motivated in the class at all.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am really demotivated and demotivate others in the class.

Item 4: How often do you conform to the class activities?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I always conform to the class activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I often conform to the class activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I sometimes conform to the class activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I never conform to the class activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I reject to do the classwork, and distract others too.

Item 5: To what extent are you curious to learn?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I am very curious to learn more, which makes me fully committed and attentive in the class.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am moderately curious to learn more which makes me committed and attentive in the class.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am slightly curious to learn more which makes me somehow committed and attentive in the class.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am not curious to learn more which makes me uncommitted and inattentive.
<input type="checkbox"/>	commitment. I am very uninterested in learning which makes me distract others' attention and

Item 6: How often do you ask questions in these contexts?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I usually ask questions if I am doubtful or do not understand fully.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I sometimes ask questions if I am doubtful or do not understand fully.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I rarely ask questions if I am doubtful or do not understand fully.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I do not ask questions even if I do not understand.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I even hate those who ask questions when they do not understand.

Section Three: Factors of Disengagement

Which of the following factors do you believe has impact on your disengagement? (Please tick as many boxes as you believe appropriate)

Disengagement Factors	
Individual Factors	<input type="checkbox"/> poor self-esteem
	<input type="checkbox"/> low intelligence
	<input type="checkbox"/> psychological and psychiatric problems
	<input type="checkbox"/> physical ill-health and disability
	<input type="checkbox"/> poor academic performance
	<input type="checkbox"/> repeating a grade
	<input type="checkbox"/> specific learning problems
	<input type="checkbox"/> behavioural problems
	<input type="checkbox"/> frequent absence



Disengagement Factors	
Family Factors	large family size
	family conflict and abuse
	family break-up and the formation of new families
	separation from family
	parental illness
	low economic income
	parental unemployment
	educational status of parents
Social Factors	Gender
	race or ethnicity
	neighbourhood and regional characteristics (e.g., low socio-economic status, remote or rural location)
	negative community norms
College Environment Factors	college management
	college size
	disciplinary climate
	social climate (e.g., tolerance of diversity, and prevalence of bullying)
	staff workload and their relationships to one another
Class Environment Factors	class size
	access to learning resources
	student-teacher relations
	peer relations
	professional teaching staff
	teacher commitment
	teacher planning and behaviours
	curriculum/ course book
	teaching activities
	assessment criteria/ practices

Appendix 2
Students' Interview

1. In what classes do you engage the most? Why?
2. What deeply engages you in the class?
3. Do you believe that motivation promotes your engagement level in the class? If so, how?
4. What usually makes you curious in the class?
5. Do you believe that working alone or in groups is more likely to maintain your engagement level? Why?
6. What do you do to regain your attention after losing it in the class?



ليكۆلپنه وه يهك له ره هند و ناست و هۆكاره كانى ئاويتته بوونى قوتاييانى كۆلپى له زمانى ئينگليزى وهك زمانىكى بيانى

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پوخته

كه م ئاويتته بوونى قوتاييانى ئينگليزى وهك زمانىكى بيانى له پۇلدا يه كيكه له ئالنگاريه جددى و سه ره كه يه كان نهك ته نها بۇ مامۇستا تازه كان به لكو بۇ مامۇستايانى به ئەزمونيش. ده شى بيبته هۆى ره فتارى تيكده رانه و سه رنه جام ده رفته تى فير بوون له لايه ن قوتاييانه وه كه م بكانته وه.

ئهم توپۇزپنه وه يه هه ولده دات رادهى ره هند و ناسته كانى ئاويتته بوونى قوتاييان بدۇزپته وه. سه ره راي ته وه ش، هه ولده دات ته وه هۆكاره باوانه بدۇزپته وه كه ده بنه هۆى ئاويتته نه بوونى قوتاييان و ته وه هۆكارانه ش كه ناستى ئاويتته بوونى قوتاييان به ره وپيش ده بن و ده پيارپزن. ئهم توپۇزپنه وه يه له سه ر ۱۲۹ قوتايى به شى زمانى ئينگليزى له كۆلپى پوره ردهى بنه رتهى، زانكۆى سه لاهه ددين-هه وليتر بۇ سالى خويندنى ۲۰۲۱-۲۰۲۲ ته نجام دراوه. پارپسى و چاوپيكيه وتن يهك به دواى يهك بۇ كۆكرده وهى زانبارى چهنديته تى و چۇنايه تى به كارهيتراون.

ئهنجامى توپۇزپنه وه كه ده ريخست كه قوتاييان ره هنده كانى ئاويتته بوون به شپوه يه كي نايه كسان پراكتيزه ده كهن. جگه له وه ش، توپۇزپنه وه كه نيشانيدا كه قوتاييان ناستى ئاويتته بوون به رپزهى جباواز پراكتيز ده كهن. سه ره راي ته وه ش، توپۇزپنه وه كه باوترينى ته وه هۆكارانه ده رده خات كه ده بنه هۆى ئاويتته نه بوونى قوتاييان و ته وه هۆكارانه ش ئاويتته بوونيان به ره وپيش ده بن و ده پارپزن. له كۆتايدا، هه نديك پاسپارده خراونه ته روو.

وشه سه ره كه يه كان: ئاويتته بوونى قوتاييانى ئينگليزى وهك زمانىكى بيانى، ناست و ره هنده كانى ئاويتته بوون، هۆكاره كانى ئاويتته بوون و ئاويتته نه بوون.

دراسة حول أبعاد ومستويات وأسباب انخراط طلبة الكلية في اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية

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ملخص

إن قلة انخراط (اندماج) طلبة قسم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية في الصف تعد إحدى المعوقات الرئيسة ليس فقط للاستاذة حديثي العهد بالتدريس بل للاستاذة الكبار أيضاً. ويمكن أن يكون هذا المعوق سبباً في السلوك التخريبي وبالنتيجة يقلل من فرص تعلم الطلبة.

تحاول هذه الدراسة إيجاد مدى أبعاد ومستويات انخراط الطلبة، فضلاً عن محاولة الوصول إلى تلك الاسباب الشائعة التي تؤدي إلى عدم انخراط الطلبة، ومعرفة تلك الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى تطوير مستوى انخراط الطلبة والحفاظ عليه. انجز هذا البحث باتخاذ مجموعة من الطلبة كنماذج للدراسة بواقع (129) طالبا وطالبة من قسم اللغة الانكليزية بكلية التربية الأساسية/ جامعة صلاح الدين- أربيل للسنة الدراسية 2021-2022. وقد كان الاستبيان والمقابلة استخدمتا واحدة تلو الأخرى لجمع المعلومات الكمية والكيفية.

وقد بيّنت النتائج التي توصلت إليها الدراسة أن الطلبة يطبقون أبعاد الانخراط بشكل غير متساوي، فضلاً عن بيان أن الطلبة يطبقون مستوى الانخراط بنسب مختلفة ومتفاوتة. وبيّنت الدراسة أيضاً أكثر الأسباب شيوعاً في عدم انخراط الطلبة، وتلك الأسباب التي تطور الانخراط وتحافظ عليه. وفي النهاية تم عرض بعض التوصيات.

الكلمات المفاتيح: انخراط طلبة قسم اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية، مستويات وأبعاد الانخراط، أسباب الانخراط وعدم الانخراط.