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STUDENT-EMPOWERED ENGAGEMENT AND SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

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Abstract: **This study is aimed to find out the relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning. This study utilized the non-experimental quantitative research design using descriptive technique involving teachers in Davao Occidental Division, Philippines. The study was conducted on the second semester of School Year 2025-2026. Research instruments on student empowered engagement and self-directed learning were used as source of data. Using mean and pearson-r as statistical tools to treat the data, the study showed the following results: the study found to exhibit a very high level of student empowered engagement. This means that the provisions relating to student empowered engagement is always manifested.The study revealed a very high level of self-directed learning. This indicates that the provisions relating to self-directed learning are embodied in the item is always manifested.The results of the study also confirm that there is a significant relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning. This implies that the higher the student empowered engagement, the higher is the self-directed learning. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning was rejected.**

Keywords: **student empowered engagement, self-directed learning, school administration and supervision, quantitative research.**

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly changing world, self-directed learning has become an essential skill for students to manage their own educational journeys, especially with the increasing availability of online resources and flexible learning environments. Self-directed learning involves students taking the initiative to identify their learning needs, set goals, find resources, and evaluate their progress independently. However, despite its importance, many students struggle to effectively engage in self-directed learning, which limits their academic growth and lifelong learning potential (Robinson & Persky, 2020).

There is a growing problem of students with low level of self-directed learning ability. While not pinpointing specific countries, a broad analysis of PISA 2022 highlights that many students across OECD nations struggle with using learning strategies necessary for lifelong learning, such as planning and regulating their effort.Alarmingly, only about half of OECD students report enjoying learning new things, suggesting a lack of intrinsic motivation often linked to self-directed learning habits (Khairah, Surjono & Nurmiati, 2025).

In Czech Republic and Slovakia, a study found out that self-directed learning ability of the students was consistently the lowest-ranked self-regulatory strategy among Slovak and Czech learners.This indicates that the capacity to self-direct one's learning path remains at the lower end in these contexts (Temiaková, 2024).

In the national scale, low self-directed learning of students is evident in the stud.y A validated survey found out that students have a low performance in task management and help-seeking strategies which are key components of effective self-directed learning. In the same lens, a study by UPLB during the pandemic assessing e-learning readiness revealed that Filipino

university students were not well-prepared in learner control, meaning they struggled to take initiative, manage their learning process, and sustain motivation on their own (Yao, 2021).

In the local context, there is 6 of every 10 students in an average classroom often lack the necessary motivation and discipline to manage their learning autonomously. These students typically rely on structured schedules, teacher-led instruction, and clear guidance, which can create dependency. When students are suddenly expected to take control of their learning without sufficient preparation or support, they may feel overwhelmed or unsure about how to plan and regulate their studies effectively.

This study seeks to underscore the relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning. Today, the researcher has rarely come across with a study on the study regarding these two variables. It is in this context that the researcher prompted to conduct this study and geographical gap.

II. BODY OF ARTICLE

Statement of the Problem

This study is aimed to find out the relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following objectives:

1. What is the level of student empowered engagement in terms of:

1.1 Emotion;

1.2 Cognition, and

1.3 Behavior?

2. What is the level of self-directed learning in terms of:

2.1 Learning Motivation;

2.2 Planning and Implementation Abilities, and

2.3 Interpersonal Communication Skills?

3. Is there a significant relationship between relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning?

Hypothesis

Ho1. There is no significant relationship between relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study will adopt a quantitative correlational research design to examine the relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning. The quantitative approach allows for statistical analysis of the strength and direction of associations between variables, providing empirical evidence on how teacher competencies in digital technology influence students' motivation and learning behavior.

Non-experimental correlational research is a research design used to determine whether and to what degree a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables, without establishing cause and effect in which in this study, it will look into the relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning.

Statistical Treatment

The following statistical tools were used in the analysis of data.

Mean. This will be used to determine the level of student empowered engagement and self-directed learning.

Pearson r. This will be used to determine the significance of the relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning.

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IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Student Empowered Engagement

Shown in Table 1 is the level of student empowered engagement with an overall mean of 4.11 with a descriptive equivalent of very high indicating that all enumerated indicators were oftentimes observed. The overall mean was the result obtained from the mean of the indicators for the specific items from the questionnaire intended for this particular indicator which was appended in this study.

Among the enumerated indicators, emotion has the highest mean rating with a mean score of 4.63 or very high, cognition, 4.21 or very high, and behavior, 4.25 or very high.

Table 1. Student Empowered Engagement

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Levels
Emotion	4.63	Very High
Cognition	4.21	Very High
Behavior	4.25	Very High
Overall	**4.36**	**Very High**

The result of the study corresponds with the statement of Dubey, Pradhan & Sahu (2023) who verifies that student empowered engagement centers on giving learners an active role in shaping their educational experience. Instead of passively receiving information, students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning by asking questions, exploring their interests, and contributing to classroom discussions. This approach fosters a sense of responsibility and autonomy, helping students become more invested in their academic journey. When students feel their voices are heard and valued, their motivation and confidence naturally increase.

The result of the study is consistent with the statement of Ellikkal & Rajamohan (2025) who validates that a key aspect of empowered engagement is collaboration. Students work together to solve problems, share perspectives, and build knowledge collectively. Teachers act as facilitators rather than sole authorities, guiding students as they develop critical thinking and communication skills. Through group projects, peer feedback, and interactive activities, learners gain a deeper understanding of content while also building essential social and emotional competencies that prepare them for real-world challenges.

The result of the study supports the statement of Bowden, Tickle & Naumann (2021) who affirms that student empowered engagement creates a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment. By incorporating student choice, culturally relevant materials, and opportunities for reflection, educators can meet diverse learning needs and interests. This approach not only improves academic outcomes but also helps students develop lifelong skills such as self-direction, resilience, and curiosity. Empowered students are more likely to become active participants in their communities and continue learning beyond the classroom.

Level of Self-directed Learning

Shown in Table 2 is the level of self-directed learning with an overall mean of 4.20 with a descriptive equivalent of very high indicating that all enumerated indicators were oftentimes observed. The overall mean was the result obtained from the mean of the indicators for the specific items from the questionnaire intended for this particular indicator which was appended in this study.

Among the enumerated indicators, learning motivation has the highest mean rating with a mean score of 4.22 or very high, planing and implementation abilities, 4.21 or very high, and interpersonal communication skills, 4.18 or very high.

Table 2. Self-directed Learning

Indicators	Mean	Descriptive Levels
Learning Motivation	4.21	Very High
Planning and Implementation Abilities	4.22	Very High
Interpersonal Communication Skills	4.18	High
Overall	**4.20**	**Very High**

The result of the study supports the statement of Sanova, Bakar, Afrida, Kurniawan & Aldila (2022) who validates that student self-directed learning is an approach where learners take initiative and responsibility for their own educational process. Instead of relying entirely on a teacher to guide every step, students set their own goals, identify resources, and determine the strategies that work best for them. This fosters independence and encourages learners to become active participants in their education.

The result of the study is in agreement with the statement of Dahal & Bhat (2023) who affirms that a key element of self-directed learning is the ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate one's own progress. Students learn to manage their time, stay organized, and adjust their approaches when they encounter difficulties. Skills such as goal-setting, self-discipline, and problem-solving play a major role in helping students stay on track. Teachers still provide support, but their role shifts more toward guidance and mentorship, helping students build confidence in their decision-making.

The result of the study reflects the statement of Lee & Chang (2025) who asserts that student self-directed learning prepares individuals for lifelong learning. As students develop the ability to learn independently, they become more adaptable and better equipped to handle new challenges in academic, professional, and personal settings.

Significance on the Relationship between Student Empowered Engagement and Self-directed Learning

Illustrated in Table 3 were the results of the test of relationship between variables involved in the study. The overall correlation had a computed value of 0.604 with a probability value of $p<0.01$ which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning is rejected.

The result of the study is in agreement with the statement of Gupta, Ali, Jiang, Fink & Du (2024) who affirms that There is a strong and meaningful relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning, as both focus on placing the learner at the center of the educational process. When students feel empowered, emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally, they are more likely to take initiative in their learning. This sense of ownership encourages them to set goals, make decisions, and actively participate, which are all essential characteristics of self-directed learning. In this way, empowered engagement acts as a foundation that supports and motivates students to become more independent learners.

Table 3. Significance on the Relationship between Student Empowered Engagement and Self-directed Learning

Pair	Variables	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Decision on Ho
IV and DV	Student Empowered Engagement and Self-directed Learning	0.604	0.000	Reject

The result of the study reflects the statement of Pokhrel, Sharma, Sharma, Poudel & Laxmi (2024) who asserts that empowered engagement also strengthens the key skills needed for self-directed learning. For example, when students are cognitively engaged, they develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities that help them plan and manage their own learning. Emotional engagement builds confidence and resilience, allowing students to persist through challenges, while behavioral engagement promotes responsibility and active participation. Together, these aspects create a learning environment where students are not only involved but also capable of directing their own progress effectively.

The result of the study confirms the statement of Siziba, Geduld & Du Toit-Brits (2025) who acknowledges that the relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning is reciprocal. As students become more self-directed, they tend to engage more deeply in their learning because they feel a stronger sense of purpose and control. At the same time, increased engagement further enhances their ability to learn independently. This cycle leads to improved academic performance, greater motivation, and the development of lifelong learning skills that extend beyond the classroom.

V. CONCLUSION

Based from the findings of the study, conclusions are drawn in this section. The study found to exhibit a very high level of student empowered engagement. This means that the provisions relating to student empowered engagement is always manifested.

The study revealed a very high level of self-directed learning. This indicates that the provisions relating to self-directed learning are embodied in the item is always manifested. The results of the study also confirm that there is a significant relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning. This implies that the higher the student empowered engagement, the higher is the self-directed learning. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning was rejected.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study revealed that there is a very high level of student empowered engagement. The researcher recommends that students may improve in the area of cognition since this has the lowest mean rating among all the indicators. The students may To further improve learning experience, students may continue building on strong effort in acquiring ideas by organizing and refining them before sharing in class. Try summarizing thoughts into clear key points or examples so they are easier for others to understand and respond to. They may connect ideas to real-life situations or previous lessons, which will deepen contributions and make them more meaningful.

Aim to enhance the quality of participation by actively listening to others and building on their ideas. Ask follow-up questions, provide constructive feedback, and encourage quieter classmates to share. To improve concentration and deepen understanding of concepts, students may continue using different learning strategies such as note-taking, summarizing, and self-questioning. Also try setting specific learning goals for each class and reflecting afterward on what have learned. Additionally, maintain engagement with classmates by sharing insights and working together, but also be open to diverse perspectives. This balance of focus, strategy, and collaboration will help achieve a deeper and more effective learning experience.

The study revealed a very high level of self-directed learning. The researcher recommends that students may improve in the area of interpersonal communication skills as this has the lowest mean rating among all the indicators. Students may use interactions for learning by taking notes and set goals based on discussions with peers and teachers to guide your future learning; explore language and culture by practicing the language and learn about the culture of those you interact with to improve understanding and communication; strengthen communication skills by practicing clear, organized oral presentations and well-structured writing; review and refine your work, and teach and explain effectively by using examples, visuals, and encourage questions when explaining lessons to classmates to reinforce your understanding and help others learn.

The results of the study also confirm that there is a significant relationship between student empowered engagement and self-directed learning. Students may take initiative in learning by actively participating in class discussions, asking questions, and exploring topics that interest you. Develop self-directed learning habits such as goal-setting, planning, and reflecting on your progress. By combining engagement with independence, you will deepen your understanding, boost motivation, and become a more responsible and lifelong learner.

Teachers may create learning environments that empower students by offering choices, encouraging questions, and valuing student input. Use strategies that foster cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement, such as collaborative projects, inquiry-based activities, and reflective exercises. Support students in developing self-directed learning skills by guiding them in goal-setting, planning, and monitoring their own progress.

Principals may promote school policies and programs that encourage student-centered learning and active engagement. Provide teachers with professional development on fostering empowered engagement and supporting self-directed learning. Encourage a school culture where student voice, autonomy, and collaboration are valued and integrated into daily classroom practices.

District Supervisors may support initiatives that integrate student engagement and self-directed learning across curricula. Allocate resources and training that help schools implement student-centered pedagogies effectively. Monitor and evaluate programs to ensure they enhance both student empowerment and self-directed learning, leading to improved academic outcomes and lifelong learning skills.

The researcher also recommends to future researchers to conduct similar study and explore some indicators that are not included in this study in another setting in order to uncover new knowledge relevant to the topics presented in this study.

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