



A STUDY ON AUTHENTIC LEARNING PRINCIPLES IN GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine whether the General Education courses of Letran Manila provide authentic learning. Three hundred thirty-six student responses from a researcher-made instrument based on the Principles of Authentic Learning by Ashford-Rowe et al. (2013) were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis. Results showed that the GenEd curriculum provided agreeable and authentic learning experiences in Metacognition, Accuracy, Feedback, and Collaboration. However, few indicators under Level of Challenge, Product and Performances, Knowledge and Skill Transfer, and Environment and Tools yielded neutral results. The researchers concluded that students cannot bridge connections on how the difficult tasks that they do, along with the limited future work-training environment and tools in the General Education curriculum, hone the knowledge and skills they need for their careers. A proposal for a possible solution was provided by this study. The researchers also recommended further research as the utilized tool, as the utilized researcher-made instrument yielded a 0.97 Cronbach Alpha value.

Keywords: Education, General Education, Authentic Learning, Metacognition, Knowledge and Skill Transfer

INTRODUCTION

Considering the landscape of education in the current years, most higher education institutions are faced with tons of challenges. One topic that stands out is, of course, providing learning opportunities. Recently, according to Weber (2019), higher education requires finding ways to prepare students for the workforce through classroom experiences. Learning by experience creates an authentic learning experience for students. This is a major factor that must be given attention to by any learning institution.

With the consistently low enrolment numbers in Colegio de San Juan de Letran Manila, numerous factors might be at play. One of the many factors may lie in the quality and applicability of content delivered in the courses the students take, in particular, the General Education Subjects. All students take General Education courses regardless of their department. Authentic learning allows for the application of what was learned to real-world scenarios through active learning (Becker et al., 2019). One might question whether the General Education courses provide the chance for such a type of learning.

General Education courses are an essential part of the curriculum of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Students of all courses are mandated to take these courses as part of the completion of their curriculum. As mandated by the Commission on Higher Education, these courses aim to impart to students essential things that may relate to their field of study or their lives in the future (CMO 20 s. 2013). This is why all HEIs have a general education curriculum separate from the major subjects.

Importance of Authentic Learning

Higher Education Institutions should implement General and Professional Education Subjects that are Outcomes-Based (Asio et al., 2022). In which General Education (GenEd) Subjects should act as a complement to the future careers of students. Ideally, GenEd subjects need to impart concepts, skills, and/or ideas that the students can utilize in their respective fields of work. The faculty and the curriculum should induce learning experiences that would be of maximum benefit for the students' careers. This is where the concept of authentic learning comes into play and why following an Outcomes-Based Education is a key to adhering to the concept of authentic learning.

Colegio de San Juan de Letran is not new to utilizing an Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) - a form of authentic learning - in which students are asked to participate in activities with products suited for real-world applications. Participating in an OBE class may increase the possible linkages students will have once they enter their respective fields (Mangali et al., 2019) due to the applicability and relatability of the contents of said courses. This is a good place to start to adhere to authentic learning.

However, it can be noted that even though, ideally speaking, Outcomes-Based Education seems very promising in assuring the application of student learning in real-life scenarios, OBE has no shortage of challenges. Teacher-based and administrator-based implementation problems (Ag Damit et al., 2021), along with the content of the curriculum itself and the skills induced by the activities, may come up as a hindrance to full authentic learning.

Although the Colegio supports conducting OBE-related activities, it cannot be denied that the content and the curriculum of the courses it offers may not be aligned with the principles of authentic assessment (Ajjawi et al., 2019; Alonzo et al., 2023). In particular, the General Education courses may be the most misaligned of all of the courses students must take due to the general nature of their content. Aside from that, depending on the approach of the faculty in charge of the subjects, certain skills may not be transferable to the workplace scenario of their takers in the future. This will then lead students not only to be disengaged from the subject, but also to not find the value of the course, as it has no purpose for them. To keep their engagement, Lima (2021) suggests that output-based learning makes students keep their interest and makes them genuine and active participants in class, again, highlighting the importance of authenticity.

This also highlights the importance of adhering to the contents of the curriculum and assessment to the key facets of authentic assessment (Villarroel et al., 2019). Those courses that hit multiple important aspects of authentic learning will likely encourage students to take said courses because of their perceived importance to their future career, as it gives them a clear edge. This is one thing that Colegio must consider, given its status regarding its enrollees.

There are various principles of authentic assessment (Ashford-Rowe et al., as cited in Connolly et al., 2023) that can serve as a guideline towards better applications of General Education courses. These can be used to improve the relatability of these courses to the professional lives of students. These courses, to become more relatable, must not only prioritize technical skills but also soft skills because of their value in various business areas (Cook, 2020; Montano, 2023).

Soft skills are important for 21st-century learning. It is also equally important to maintain an excellent working environment. This highlights another important aspect that General Education courses must tackle - developing these soft skills (Fajaryati et al., 2020; Noah & Abdul Aziz, 2020; Sotiriadou et al., 2019; Teng et al., 2019). By following the authentic assessment principles, this can be done. These are summarized in this study as: (1) Metacognition, (2) Accuracy, (3) Feedback, (4) Collaboration, (5) Level of Challenge, (6) Products and Performances, (7) Knowledge and Skill Transfer, and (8) Environment and Tools. The more these principles are hit by a curriculum, the higher its authenticity and applicability become (Sokhanvar et al., 2021).

Authentic Learning Principles

The fifth principle, Level of Challenge, deals with the capability of the activity to allow students to demonstrate their higher-order thinking and abilities (Chabeli et al., 2021). As with any effective activity, it is much more valuable for students to be able to analyze, create, and evaluate, rather than just recall. This relates to the first tenet - metacognition. That action alone of evaluation is already a higher-order thinking skill. However, if the students can reflect on their own actions, the authenticity of the activity or lesson becomes richer (Wiewiora, A., & Kowalkiewicz, 2018). Self-reflections make students feel more grounded in real-world scenarios. In turn, this makes the learning process more authentic.

This leads to authentic learning principles two and eight - accuracy and environment and tools. The core of authentic learning is to test students' abilities through simulations of real-world scenarios or, to narrow it down, the demands of the workplace (Karunanayaka & Naidu, 2021). To make these simulations more accurate, the curriculum should provide the necessary environment and materials for students to experience the real scenario within the context of a simulation.

In simulating the workplace, it is also important to tackle interpersonal relationships. This is where principles three and four focus. Feedback mechanisms in learning are necessary. It allows for the further development of the students because they are receiving key points of improvement upon which they can work. Which is why in any curriculum, teacher-to-student feedback, student-to-teacher feedback, and student-to-student feedback should all be integral parts of assessment. Not only does this allow students to develop their activity-based skills, but it also fosters interactions and collaboration, which are also important. Collaborative activities promote a training ground for real-world interactions in the future jobs of the students (Gosselin, 2024). The more they develop this skill early on, the better they can collaborate with the people around them in the future.

Tenets six and seven - Products and Performances and Knowledge and Skill Transfer - are the standing points of authentic learning. This focuses on the importance of how any skill or knowledge they learn must reflect what they need in their future careers or lives (Jackson et al., 2019). With this, students will truly give their attention and time to those courses that offer the greater chance of experiencing these principles. These are the aspects that any curriculum must have to be more authentic. Each aspect is geared towards the future life of the student - an important part of a curriculum that adult students are inherently seeking to make relatable. This is why adult learners should be taught using methods and ways that stick to the theory of andragogy (Lewis & Bryan, 2021).

Andragogy and Authentic Learning

Andragogy proposes that adult learners should learn differently from young learners. The reason is that adults tend to look for a relationship between what they learn to what they do in their careers and their lives. With this, it is of high importance for college courses to deliver authentic learning to ensure that adult learners learn as much as possible from the courses that they take, and to ensure that their curriculum remains relevant.

As a result, it is important to look for areas of adjustment to the General Education Curriculum of Colegio de San Juan de Letran Manila to ensure that said curriculum provides authentic learning to all of its students in each program (Ornellas et al., 2019). Because even with effective teaching and work performance, higher education institutions still need to consider revisiting and revising the curriculum for General Education subjects so that it can be adaptive to a changing society (Cook, 2022; Mangila, 2022; Singha et al., 2023).

This study created a framework/proposal that details the possible points for improvement for the General Education curriculum to make it more relevant to the professional lives of students. This is in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations, 2012).

The researchers believe that assessing the authenticity of the General Education courses is key to determining whether the institution is catering to the needs of modern learners. This study revolved around the question: How can the General Education courses of Letran Manila improve its curriculum across all programs? To address this main question, the researchers explored the following research questions: (1) How do Letran Manila students experience authentic learning in General Education courses? (2) Based on the experiences of students, what framework/proposal can be suggested to strengthen authentic learning in General Education courses? The researchers utilized the extracted variables as the focus of a syllabus and/or curriculum revision. This can help in the continuous development of General Education courses to make them more authentic and relatable for each program, thus improving the Colegio as well.

METHODS

Research Design

The researchers aimed to make a generalization based on the thoughts of the students. With this in mind, the study used a descriptive quantitative approach to tackle its aims. By using numerical data and assigning categories, generalizing the responses of the students became possible. This design also allows replicability, which ensures the counterchecking of the results for further studies.

Data Collection

A survey questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms through simple random sampling to selected 3rd and 4th-year students of Colegio de San Juan de Letran Manila. A total of 336 respondents were asked for this study. The survey questionnaire was researcher-made and was derived from the elements of authentic learning from the study of Ashford-Rowe et al. (2013). Results were analyzed through descriptive statistics and were used to craft a proposal for the improvement of General Education courses. The study participants are students who met the following criteria: (1) A current student of Colegio de San Juan de Letran – Manila for School Year 2024-2025. (2) Currently in their third or fourth year in terms of residency at Colegio de San Juan de Letran. (3) Must have completed at least five or more general education and/or general education elective courses in Colegio de San Juan de Letran.

Ethical Considerations

There were no risks for the participants involved in this study. However, to prevent retaliation from the faculty against the students, the researchers ensured their anonymity. The participants were informed of the researchers' aim, ethical considerations, and privacy statement through an Informed Consent form at the beginning of the survey questionnaire. Participants provided their full agreement for the researchers to collect, use, and manage their personal data for data collection and analysis in relation to the study. The data coming from the participants were only used to help in the creation of a proposal to improve the quality of General Education courses of Colegio de San Juan de Letran. No alterations to the results were made to ensure transparency and accuracy.

The researchers assured that all responses from the respondents were kept anonymous. Subsequent findings of the study were only used for research and supporting documents. The researchers also ensured that the information participants provided was treated with adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012. To avoid plagiarism and to ensure the validity and reliability of the study, before publication, it will be run under a plagiarism checker.

It should be noted that participation in this study was voluntary. Participants were able to choose to withdraw their consent at any moment, should they have felt the need to. To avoid bias, participants did not receive any reward or payment once they had completed this survey – only the feeling of accomplishment that they had been part of the mechanism of change in improving the quality of education in the Colegio.

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on General Education courses only. And, to obtain a more accurate assessment of the General Education courses, the study only focused on students who had taken, if not all, GenEd courses in their curriculum. This study sets its sights only on authentic learning based on the principles proposed by Ashford-Rowe et al. (2013) and will not assess any other aspects of the General Education area curriculum.

RESULTS

The respondents who belonged to the third- and fourth-year levels are from varied programs. In presenting the data, the researchers grouped the programs by department. The following table presents the respondents in this manner:

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Department	Frequency	Percentage
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	147	44.35%
College of Business Administration and Accountancy	95	28.27%
College of Engineering and Information Technology	92	27.38%
Total	336	100%

The researchers present the findings based on the data collected in this research. To address the first research question, the researchers interpreted the data

based on the mean, mode, and standard deviation. This was done to make a general view of the experiences of the students about authentic learning in the General Education courses of Colegio de San Juan de Letran. The responses are presented as follows:

Table 2: Results for the Tenets Metacognition (M), Accuracy (A), Feedback (F), and Collaboration (C)

Item	Mean	SD	Mode	Categorical Interpretation
M01	3.67	1.01	4	Agree
M02	3.88	0.96	4	Agree
M03	3.61	1.03	4	Agree
M04	3.64	0.99	4	Agree
M05	3.65	0.99	4	Agree
M06	3.65	0.94	4	Agree
M07	3.44	1.02	4	Agree
M08	3.64	0.96	4	Agree
A01	3.57	0.98	4	Agree
A02	3.74	0.90	4	Agree
A03	3.71	0.90	4	Agree
A04	3.70	0.91	4	Agree
A05	3.64	0.90	4	Agree
A06	3.80	0.93	4	Agree
A07	3.37	1.11	4	Agree
F01	3.47	1.00	4	Agree
F02	3.72	1.03	4	Agree
F03	3.61	1.03	4	Agree
F04	3.43	1.05	4	Agree
F05	3.44	1.08	4	Agree
F06	3.49	1.08	4	Agree
F07	3.57	1.03	4	Agree
F08	3.37	1.17	4	Agree
C01	4.04	0.96	4	Agree
C02	3.99	0.91	4	Agree
C03	3.99	0.88	4	Agree
C04	3.79	0.99	4	Agree
C05	3.68	1.07	4	Agree
C06	3.79	0.97	4	Agree
C07	3.76	1.03	4	Agree

"Metacognition" (M01-M08) shows that the item responses normally incline towards agreement as the highest. This means that most of the responses in this category show an inclination towards positive responses. All items showed responses in favor of "Agree" and "Completely Agree". Neutral responses are present, but they are only minimal. The weighted mean is at 3.65, which reflects the presence of the neutral responses, and the standard deviation is slightly lower, meaning the answers are more compact in the responses.

In the "Accuracy" category (A01-A07), the dominant response goes to "Agree". All items show responses that go with positive sentiment on the indicators, as many of the answers agree. The weighted mean is 3.65. As for the standard deviation means minimal variations for the responses once more.

For the tenet "Feedbacking" (F01-F08), the respondent data shows that the answers incline towards agreement. All indicators show responses with the dominance of agreement, and even support more with responses in complete agreement, though neutral responses are observable. The weighted mean is at 3.51 while the standard deviation lies between 1.00 to 1.17, the greatest of which is on item F08.

The data for "Collaboration" (C01-C07) all show responses with the dominance of agree and completely agree. This shows a positive sentiment towards the indicators. The weighted mean is 3.86. The standard deviation also shows minimal variation in the responses.

Table 3: Level of Challenge (LC), Products and Performances (PP), Knowledge and Skills Transfer (KST), and Environment and Tools (ET)

Item	Mean	SD	Mode	Categorical Interpretation
LC01	3.10	1.06	3	Neither Agree nor Disagree
LC02	3.48	0.95	4	Agree
LC03	3.60	0.99	4	Agree
LC04	3.77	0.88	4	Agree
LC05	3.35	1.05	4	Agree
LC06	3.03	1.11	3	Neither Agree nor Disagree
LC07	3.51	1.03	4	Agree
PP01	3.92	0.84	4	Agree
PP02	3.87	0.86	4	Agree
PP03	3.68	0.94	4	Agree
PP04	3.76	0.93	4	Agree
PP05	3.38	1.09	3	Agree
PP06	3.56	0.99	4	Agree
PP07	3.28	1.07	3	Neither Agree nor Disagree
KST01	3.54	0.89	4	Agree
KST02	3.14	1.14	4	Agree
KST03	3.44	1.06	4	Agree
KST04	3.49	0.99	4	Agree
KST05	3.35	1.03	3	Neither Agree nor Disagree
KST06	3.51	0.95	4	Agree

ET01	3.51	1.08	4	Agree
ET02	3.58	0.98	4	Agree
ET03	3.56	1.00	4	Agree
ET04	3.32	1.11	4	Agree
ET05	3.30	1.11	4	Agree
ET06	3.09	1.22	3	Neither Agree nor Disagree
ET07	3.46	1.06	4	Agree
ET08	3.20	1.21	3	Neither Agree nor Disagree

In the analysis of the "Level of Challenge" field (LC01-LC07), respondents showed agreement with most of the items (LC02, LC03, LC04, LC05, and LC07). However, there were also neutral responses as seen in LC01 and LC06. A weighted mean of 3.41 indicates that, for this field, many of the respondents agree with the indicators given. However, two items may require attention as to why the neutrality rose above. Standard Deviation values indicate minimal variance between the responses of the students.

The data within the "Products and Performances" field (PP01-PP07) shows a distribution of the responses that leans between agree and neutrality. Leading responses on Agree were found on indicators PP01, PP02, PP03, PP04, and PP06. On PP05 and PP07, however, while still leading to agree responses, it has been found that there are greater neutral responses on these indicators. Even so, the weighted mean is at 3.64, while the standard deviation only shows minimal variety in terms of the responses.

Results for the "Knowledge and Skill Transfer" (KST01-KST06) show that all items incline with the same pattern. KST01, KST02, KST03, KST04, and KST06 all show patterns with "agree" as the leading response, followed closely by neutral responses. As for KST05, the data differ as both agree, and neutral responses end with the same frequency. Judging by the mean, however, it can be categorically interpreted as neutral. The weighted mean result is at 3.41 since most answers incline with agree, though the notable neutral responses need to be accounted for, especially with indicators having equal or close frequency with agree responses. The standard deviation, once again, shows minimal variation with the responses.

Finally, as for the "Environment and Tools" (ET01-ET08) category, responses fall under the "Agree" selection, followed by "Completely Agree," suggesting a good positivity inclination but still showing a notable amount of neutral responses. Most items (ET01, ET02, ET03, ET04, ET05, ET07) show similar response patterns. ET08 shows a substantial neutral response, and ET06 leads with neutral responses. The weighted mean is at 3.38, which shows that the indicators, especially the one leading with neutral responses, need attention. The standard deviation of indicators ET06 and ET08 at 1.22 and 1.21, respectively, is far more deviated than the other items.

The findings of this research show that the responses are not evenly divided among the categories. For each category, the distribution of responses varies slightly across the various levels of agreement. It is noticeable that for most indicators, a more even distribution of responses can be observed throughout the students' agreement.

Some data from a few indicators may imply that the students are ambivalent as to whether there are clear importance or concise effects on the current general studies that they are being taught. This is noticeable since there is a prominent appearance of the "Neither Agree nor Disagree" response as a substantial answer in a few fields (LC01, LC06, PP05, PP07, KST05, ET06, and ET08). Although this is the case, it does not imply that there is an authenticity issue with courses within the General Education curriculum since the majority still showed "Agree". This only leads to having further developments about what these indicators refer to, so as to properly align the GenEd curriculum towards a more authentic learning experience.

It is to be noted that the self-made survey instruments the researchers have utilized for this study obtained a 0.97 Cronbach Alpha value. This indicates high internal reliability, but it also means that the instrument has its flaws. A factor analysis was also done to the instrument which resulted in certain items being considered for removal. This only means that even though the results of this study can be taken into consideration, it still needs to be taken with caution. Things related to this will be further discussed in the Conclusions/Recommendations section of this paper.

DISCUSSION

What needs to be continued

The collected data showed that the majority of the participants agree to a certain extent that the General Education courses offered at Colegio de San Juan de Letran are authentic in nature. This is particularly evident in the fields of Metacognition, Accuracy, Feedback, and Collaboration

A classroom setup that encourages metacognition promotes deeper thinking (Rivas et al., 2022; Üzümcü, 2023). This also allows the class to reflect and not just evaluate what they have learned from the course. With this, those who complete general education courses are able to think about the decisions they are making in their daily lives. Even though what they have learned in the GE courses was technical, it still somehow moved beyond the superficial to something that is a form of higher-order thinking that links it to their day-to-day lives.

Self-assessment is under metacognition and is important in the aspect of personal development (León et al., 2021; Radović et al., 2023). If the courses they are taking promote these kinds of activities, it will also help them to grow and develop as individuals (Negi & Dwivedi, 2024; Perry et al., 2018; Vechiu & Popa, 2021).

Accuracy in the field of education leads to students having more satisfaction upon doing and completing tasks (Sokhanvar et al., 2021). This means that they can see the reasoning why they are doing a particular task and how it is going to affect their current or future lives. Promotion of this tenet in classrooms is one key factor in developing an authentic learning environment. Students need to understand how important the things they are learning and the tasks they are doing are to their studies, their professional development, and their lives in general (Vo & Ho, 2024). Hitting even just one of these three can already lead to much more enthusiasm during classes.

Like metacognition, feedback is another important field which promotes self-growth. Going beyond the GenEd curriculum, this principle is important. This study both dealt with both feedback towards the students and feedback from the students. Both of which are vital to the process of involvement and personal development from the students' perspectives.

Teachers should give feedback to students in a way that indicates whatever flaws their output or performance has while also giving a sense of encouragement and appreciation (Brooks et al., 2024; Pan & Gan, 2019). This act can promote the development of the skills of the students, leading to their appreciation of the subject and its premises (Shen et al., 2021). It is also vital for students to be heard for their suggestions and comments about the curriculum and the teachers handling the courses (Carless, 2019; Röhl et al., 2025). A balance of these two feedbacking types provides a dynamic nature for the process of learning to occur.

Fostering a sense of collaboration between students is one of the 21st century skills they are required to learn (Antao & Morales, 2025). Understanding that the GE courses are inclined to promote this kind of behavior is a step in the right direction. Communication between students can help in developing interpersonal relationships and even personal growth if done properly (Gratton, 2019; Sølberg & Rismark, 2023). This also encourages healthy environmental working conditions in their future workplaces as they tend to learn how to communicate with respect and open-mindedness. This skill also provides a way for students to have linkages and connections beyond the classroom - a skill which can be proven effective once they go out into their respective professional fields in the future.

What needs to be improved

Even though in the previously mentioned principles, the GE curriculum has stood out and inclined towards the positive side, in the fields of Level of Challenge, Products and Performances, Knowledge and Skills Transfer, and Environment and Tools, a few points stood out as the respondents became collectively neutral with their responses.

The results indicate that the difficulty of GE courses is split between hard and easy. It is to be noted that this field not only deals with the difficulty of the subjects but also the overall effort and skills needed to accomplish them. Students need to have a certain level of difficulty in their subjects (Zhao et al., 2025). Students who find subjects to be too easy will become disinterested and lax about them. It may even promote absences and lateness. More difficult subjects in terms of required skills, and on the other hand, might discourage students from

learning. A perfect balance between the difficulty could enhance not only interest but also authenticity.

LC01 and LC06 are the indicators that were categorically interpreted as neutral. LC01 refers to the perception of ease in the activities of GE courses, while LC02 refers to whether the difficulty of GE activities reflects the difficulties of their future job tasks. This stance might imply that even though the activities may not be too simple or difficult, there is a misalignment in the current curriculum and the professional tasks the students may have in the future. This is an unfavorable situation as a reflection of the professional workers' tasks that should be present in the curriculum, as it promotes authentic learning.

For 21st-century learning, product-based activities are of high value as they promote higher-order thinking under the bracket of creating. This is why it is necessary to have various outputs for any subject or course (Rosal, 2024). What is more important is that these products and performances are related to the path that the students are taking to initiate kinship and enhance learning. Students should be able to use various skills in accomplishing tasks to promote training and mastery.

Based on the results, PP05 and PP07 are the items to which respondents became neutral. These neutral responses, even with slightly higher SDs compared to the others under the same principle, suggest that the way GE courses are being taught does not fully help or discourage the preparation of the students to real-world scenarios (PP05) and the relatedness of the output or performance to the future lives or careers of the students (PP07).

Preparation for real-world scenarios is of high importance during classroom interactions. Educators must be able to find ways to connect the things students do in class to the things the workers in their field are doing. In doing so, a more authentic way of learning is achieved (May & Faldas, 2024; Rollorata et al., 2025; Saong et al., 2023).

Students experience a lot of tasks in various subjects. This is why the interconnectedness of various subjects can not only promote better, authentic learning, but it can also reduce fatigue and encourage effort in the production of quality output. It should be highlighted that the knowledge and skills that students acquire in one course can be transferable or is related to skills and knowledge required or used in another course (Era & Samoraga, 2025; Mahmud & Wong, 2022). In promoting so, students themselves find that what they are learning is something of value. It also helps when the skills and knowledge they gain are part of what they can use for their future jobs as it feels like it was not a waste of time and effort.

The neutral interpretation of KST05 suggests the importance of ensuring that the skills and knowledge being trained in the General Education courses should steer towards training the students for their future work environment. This is in line with the recent information about the Philippine higher education system should emphasize the need for students to have authentic learning, which gives way for academic knowledge and skills to be on par with real-world professional demands.

The GE curriculum should be developed in a way that considers more authentic tasks and problem-solving scenarios to better enhance the readiness of students for their respective workplaces in the future. This approach also improves student engagement and creates the development of vital skills to increase employability (Jenkins & Crawford, 2021).

The classroom environment plays an important role in promoting learning (Pajarillo-Aquino, 2019). Ensuring that teachers are up to date with the latest educational technologies and that the students have a conducive learning environment can promote better learning in general (Roxas, 2023). Classrooms would also benefit from being a laboratory or simulation of the workplace environment and facilities (Miranda et al., 2021; Pickering et al., 2024; Wu et al., 2024). In doing such, students can learn how to navigate their future workspaces within the classroom walls.

Indicators ET06 (The rooms where GE courses are held simulate the environment of the students' future workplaces) and ET08 (GE courses allow students to get familiar with various aspects of their actual future workplaces through on-site visits and field studies) were both interpreted as neutral. This could mean that there is a gap in the GenEd curriculum that concerns the integration of authentic workplace situations and experiential learning. Although an On-Job Training course is present in any collegiate curriculum, it is not observed in General

Education courses, leading to the gap. However, this only means that there should be better ways that GE courses could simulate an OJT scenario to improve experiential learning activities (Acut, 2024; Comia et al., 2024).

The weighted mean of tenets' Level of Challenge, Knowledge and Skill Transfer, and Environment and Tools, should be emphasized as they fall short of indicating "Agree". This means that even though there is minimal deviation in the data, there is an almost equal distribution between the responses of "Neither Agree nor Disagree", "Agree", and "Completely Agree". Considering this information, emphasis should also be given for improvement.

Overall, this analysis indicates that the students are somehow failing to see how difficult tasks that they do, along with the limited future work-training environment and tools in the General Education curriculum, hone the knowledge and skills they need for their future careers. This leads to various issues that affect the learning process. The researchers have developed a proposal (see Appendix A) to help address the neutrality shown in some of the specific indicators. The said proposal is also aimed at further improving the authenticity of General Education courses across the various fields that make learning authentic.

CONCLUSION

General Education Curriculum and Authentic Learning

The findings indicate that General Education courses in Colegio de San Juan de Letran provide authentic learning. Specifically, based on the principles of authentic learning by Ashford-Rowe et al. (2013), the metacognition, accuracy, feedback, and collaboration are what can be considered as excellent. Highlighting metacognition enhances students' deeper understanding through reflection and self-assessment. This provides personal growth and the application of learned knowledge and skills to their daily lives.

Similarly, providing accuracy in GenEd courses better student satisfaction by clarifying the relevance of the tasks they do in a course to their academic, professional, and personal lives. The availability of the two-way means of feedback in General Education subjects can foster skill development, appreciation of subject matter, and the creation of a dynamic learning environment.

Lastly, the tilt of GE courses toward collaboration among students and other parties aligns with 21st-century skills, creating a training ground for having interpersonal relationships, open-minded communication, and the development of valuable future professional linkages.

Even with its strengths, this paper has pointed out areas to which authentic learning within GenEd courses can be further enhanced. In particular, the Level of Challenge, Product and Performances, Knowledge and Skill Transfer, and Environment and Tools principles are what need some attention as some indicators within these have neutral responses.

With regards to the level of challenge, a probable misalignment between the difficulty of GE activities and the demands of future professional tasks, impacting student interest and engagement, should be given attention. In a similar tone concerning the relevance of products and performances to real-world scenarios indicate the necessity to enhance future career preparation is indicated by effectively connecting classroom activities to professional contexts.

The neutrality of respondents toward the knowledge and skill transfer tenet highlights the need to train students of GenEd courses for their future work environments. This aligns their academic learnings with the demands of their future profession and thus improves their employability.

As for the environment and tools principle, it was suggested that the presence of on-the-job training in college curricula should be replicated, even in small-scale, within the General Education courses, to incorporate experiential learning activities to create a much more immersive learning experience.

Recommendations

The results of this study have shown that students taking General Education subjects neither agree nor disagree that the curriculum is capable of being useful as a ground to develop knowledge, skills, and experiences which will help them in their future work. This is an important aspect that requires attention, as the collegiate learning setup should be able to prepare the students for their future

lives and careers. This is why the researchers have created a proposal that could be of use to help educators within the General Education cluster enhance their teaching methods to align more with the principles of authentic learning.

It is to be noted that the survey instrument utilized for this study may have too high a reliability value, leading to its major recommendation. Future researchers could further conduct studies focusing on the reliability of the survey instrument used in this paper. Initial factor analysis conducted with the survey instrument revealed that there are items that are meant to be removed from the study. Because of this, the results of this study may only serve as an overview of the status of the General Education curriculum and its alignment with authentic learning. Once further studies have been done regarding the instruments, the curriculum can once again be retested and reassessed with the help of more reliable participants to improve it.

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