

Research on Learner Engagement in Covid-19 Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning: A Qualitative Meta-Synthesis Study

Iclal Can, Middle East Technical University Northern Cyprus Campus, Turkey

Building and maintaining learner engagement in emergency remote teaching and learning is one of the main challenges teachers face during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Developing a deeper understanding of how learning engagement can be built and sustained in emergency remote teaching and learning is crucial to enhance the quality of instruction and provide more opportunities for students. This qualitative meta-synthesis study aims to synthesize and interpret findings from research on learner engagement in Covid-19 emergency remote teaching and learning. 10 qualitative articles on learner engagement were included and synthesized in the present study. The criteria for study inclusion included peer reviewed, published, qualitative, and empirical studies that focus on learner/student engagement in Covid-19 emergency remote teaching and learning. Quantitative studies, studies that were conducted on learner engagement in distance teaching and learning prior to the pandemic, and studies that did not go through a peer-review process were excluded from the scope of the present study. The selected articles were exposed to an inductive qualitative data analysis using NVivo 11 Plus, and were double-coded. Three main themes emerged from the analysis of research on learner engagement: building strong relationships with students; enhancing interaction and cooperation among students; and creating engaging and motivating content, tasks and assessment. The results revealed that these themes were linked to three dimensions of learner engagement: emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, and behavioral engagement. The results further indicated that three factors operated as a filter between the emerging themes and dimensions: teacher factors, student factors, and contextual factors. This meta-synthesis study suggests that the dynamic connection among the emerging dimensions, themes, and factors needs to be taken into consideration while building and maintaining learner engagement in emergency remote teaching and learning. This synthesis also provides insights for future research on learner engagement in emergency remote teaching and learning.

Key Words: Learner engagement, emergency remote teaching and learning, meta-synthesis