Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice

Volume 17 | Issue 1 Article 8

2020

Investigating students' experiences of Students as Partners (SaP) for basic need fulfilment: A self-determination theory perspective

Amrita Kaur
Universiti Utara Malaysia, amrita@uum.edu.my

Mohammad Noman
University Utara Malaysia

Recommended Citation

Kaur, A., & Noman, M. (2020). Investigating students' experiences of Students as Partners (SaP) for basic need fulfilment: A self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 17*(1). https://doi.org/10.53761/1.17.1.8

Investigating students' experiences of Students as Partners (SaP) for basic need fulfilment: A self-determination theory perspective

Abstract

There is sufficient evidence that suggests Student as Partners' (SaP) practices promote student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. This study attempts to understand the underlying mechanism of SaP and its potential to provide the motivational foundation for the students who engage in it and produce quality outcomes. We employ the self-determination theory's (SDT) framework to explain how the processes of partnership lead to students' psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) in order to develop and maintain motivation. The data for this proposition was utilised from the two case studies (Author et al 2018; Author et al., 2017) that were conducted in partnership with students. The three constructs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness served as the framework that guided the data analysis. The findings establish that the social contextual factors posited by SDT for students' need satisfaction fittingly resonate with the principles and practices of SaP. Implications for SaP practitioners are discussed on how SaP can motivate students and sustain engagement

Keywords

Students as Partners, higher education, self-determination theory, teaching and learning, student-faculty partnership

Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice

Volume 17 | Issue 1 Article 8

2020

Investigating students' experiences of Students as Partners (SaP) for basic need fulfilment: A self-determination theory perspective

Amrita Kaur
Universiti Utara Malaysia, amrita@uum.edu.my

Mohammad Noman
University Utara Malaysia

Investigating students' experiences of Students as Partners (SaP) for basic need fulfilment: A self-determination theory perspective

Abstract

There is sufficient evidence that suggests Student as Partners' (SaP) practices promote student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. This study attempts to understand the underlying mechanism of SaP and its potential to provide the motivational foundation for the students who engage in it and produce quality outcomes. We employ the self-determination theory's (SDT) framework to explain how the processes of partnership lead to students' psychological need satisfaction (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) in order to develop and maintain motivation. The data for this proposition was utilised from the two case studies (Author et al 2018; Author et al., 2017) that were conducted in partnership with students. The three constructs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness served as the framework that guided the data analysis. The findings establish that the social contextual factors posited by SDT for students' need satisfaction fittingly resonate with the principles and practices of SaP. Implications for SaP practitioners are discussed on how SaP can motivate students and sustain engagement

Keywords

Students as Partners, higher education, self-determination theory, teaching and learning, student-faculty partnership

Introduction

Students as Partners (SaP), or student-faculty partnership, as a pedagogic practice in higher education involves reciprocity and collaboration between staff and students (Cliffe et al. 2017; Cook-Sather et al. 2014). In SaP collaborations, students are valued as important members of the teaching and learning community, and their opinions and suggestions are acknowledged and addressed. This brings students' agency to the core of such collaborations and makes education a joint enterprise. The process of collaboration reframes the traditional hierarchies by dissipating the power relationships between teacher and student and creates more flexible, safe and comfortable learning spaces for co-constructing knowledge (Barnes et al. 2010). These collaborations result in enhanced enthusiasm and transformed identity for both faculty and student (Cook-Sather et al. 2014). Students have reported enhanced meta-cognitive abilities, self-authorship, empowerment, agency and confidence, better relationships with the faculty and peers and increased motivation for learning (Cook-Sather & Felten 2017; Lubicz-Nawrocka 2018; Kaur et al. 2017; Kaur et al. 2019). The evidence shows that student-faculty partnership promotes favourable conditions for students to experience motivation, confidence, agency, enthusiasm and belongingness to facilitate engagement in deep-learning approaches (Cook-Sather et al. 2014; Mercer-Mapstone et al. 2017).

While the academic benefits of this approach are numerous, student engagement remains at the center of SaP processes and outcomes (Matthews et al. 2019). A large number of studies conducted during the last two decades have unequivocally demonstrated strong correlations between student engagement and factors like positive student satisfaction, persistence and enhanced learning (Astin 1993; Chickering & Gamson 1987; Kuh et al. 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini 2005). On the other hand, some studies also suggest that students' motivation is a prerequisite and the strongest predictor of their engagement, and that high-quality, intrinsic motivation would result in students' active engagement (Zhen et al. 2017). Intrinsically motivated students demonstrate authentic engagement, while extrinsically motivated students demonstrate passive compliance and students who are not motivated at all are disengaged to the point of being called "rebellious" (Saeed & Zyngier 2012). Hence, having intrinsically motivated students is essential for quality engagement.

Even though the literature on SaP outcomes often reports students' engagement and motivation under a single umbrella (Cook-Sather et al. 2014; Matthews et al. 2019), it is important to consider the two constructs as distinct, as the evidence suggests that motivation and engagement are empirically differentiable (Yu & Martin 2014). According to Reeve (2012, p.151), motivation is a "private, unobservable, psychological, neural, and biological" construct, while engagement is "publicly observable behaviour". Motivated students are driven by their incessant focus on outcomes, while students who are engaged are more interested in the process and strive hard to bring it to a conclusion. It is essential to understand these underlying differences to explain the relationship between SaP and student engagement. We propose that students' engagement during SaP is the outcome of their motivation experienced during SaP collaborations. We adopt a self-determination theory (SDT) perspective to explain the motivational dynamics related to the satisfaction of the three basic needs involved in SaP collaborations.

SDT is a contemporary theory of motivation (Ryan & Deci 2000) that addresses the issues of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The theory proposes three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. Students' experiences of the fulfilment of these needs are likely to predict their intrinsic motivation and quality engagement with their learning (Reeve 2012). The theory specifically highlights the role of the classroom environment and teachers' behaviours

(social contextual factors) that can either support or hinder the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs (Ryan & Deci 2000). We believe that the SaP practices have the potential to influence classroom and learning environments and shape the ways students and faculty interact during the course of teaching and learning. It is evident in the literature that SaP practices and principles have the potential to build motivational foundations by providing favourable learning conditions for students' engagement in learning. In the current study, we employ the SDT lens to explore how students' experiences of SaP collaborations lead to the satisfaction of SDT's three basic psychological needs and provide a motivational foundation for intrinsic motivation.

Overview: self-determination, need satisfaction and motivation

SDT is a contemporary theory of motivation that proposes three basic psychological needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness – as essential ingredients for human motivation, optimal functioning and well-being (Deci & Ryan 2000, 1985). The need for autonomy refers to an individual's experience of choice, volition, agency and self-endorsement. Research has shown that when students experience agency and choice in the classroom, they report self-determination and intrinsic motivation for engaging in academic activities (Niemiec & Ryan 2009). The need for competence refers to feeling confident, capable and self-efficacious. Evidence suggests that when students are trusted for undertaking a challenging task and are assigned responsibilities, and when they feel capable of producing a change in their environment, they experience competence need satisfaction and report intrinsic motivation to engage in academic tasks (Sansone & Harackiewicz 2000). The need for relatedness refers to connectedness, interpersonal bonding and a sense of belonging among individuals. Students who experience the satisfaction of this need also report intrinsic motivation (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick 2014).

Individuals are innately curious, agentic, inspired and intrinsically motivated towards striving to learn and master new skills (Deci & Ryan 2000, 1985). These natural growth tendencies serve as the motivational foundations for high-quality effort, engagement and academic functioning (Ryan & Deci 2000; Reeve 2006). SDT asserts that social contextual factors that facilitate satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs can sustain an individual's innate growth tendencies and support intrinsic motivation for proactively engaging in tasks (Ryan & Deci 2000). Alternatively, an environment that thwarts the satisfaction of these needs would lead to need frustration and undermine growth tendencies and an individual's motivational foundation quality engagement (Longo et al. 2016).

In the realm of education, the social contextual factors that constitute classroom climate, such as classroom conditions or institutional contexts that support these three basic psychological needs, are considered crucial. The degree to which institutional and classroom contexts meet those psychological needs determines students' motivation for quality engagement. Stakeholders or significant others involved in the process of education can facilitate the need for competence by communicating realistic expectations to students by providing consistent and constructive feedback and creating opportunities to undertake challenges (Hang et al. 2015; Ratelle & Duchesne 2014). Autonomy can be fostered by listening to and acknowledging students' perspectives, and providing them with the opportunity to choose, take initiative and exercise their ideas (Kaur et al. 2014; Reeve 2006). Relatedness can be nurtured by valuing relationships and establishing connectedness by communicating through reciprocal relationships such as mutual respect and mutual reliance on each other (Kumar & Kaur 2019; Slemp & Vella-Brodrick 2014). The contexts that facilitate the satisfaction of SDT's three basic psychological needs would intrinsically motivate students to undertake activities. In turn, their engagement would then be manifested in energised behaviours characterised by interest, quality efforts, persistence and

positive emotions (Miserandino 1996). In the current study, we examined two case studies of SaP projects in the higher-education setting to analyse students' experiences of fulfilment of SDT's three basic psychological needs during the partnerships for their motivation and engagement.

The current study

This article aims to explore the motivational processes underlying student-faculty partnerships using SDT as a theoretical lens. For this purpose, the study used the data collected from two case studies (Kaur et al. 2017; Kaur et al. 2019) that were conducted in partnership with the students in the Malaysian context. The assessment of data sets from the two studies suggested that they were appropriate to answer the secondary analysis research question. Following the guidelines from Long-Sutehall et al. (2010) for the process of conducting a secondary analysis of primary qualitative datasets, the next section describes both the data sets in detail. The primary research question that guided the current study was:

How do students' experiences of SaP collaborations lead to the fulfillment of SDT's three basic psychological needs?

Data Set 1

Case Study 1– Designing Inclusive Assessment in Partnership

In this study, a total of 114 in-service teachers, aged between 28 and 40 years, enrolled in the Master of Education degree program at a public university in Malaysia partnered with three faculty members to design, develop, implement and evaluate contextually sensitive assessment protocols for an inclusive and fair assessment. Contrary to the traditional practice of the authority to design assessment tasks belonging exclusively to instructors while students remain passive followers, this study took students' voices into consideration to document the challenges of traditional assessment and collaboratively develop a protocol. This case study was aimed at answering the research question: "What were the students' experiences of partnering with their faculty in designing inclusive assessment?" A design-based research methodology was employed that involves a systematic cyclic inquiry, design, development, implementation and evaluation of contextually sensitive designs to improve educational practices and share knowledge and outcomes with other practitioners (Van den Akker et al. 2006; Wang & Hannafin 2005). The data for this study was collected over a period of two semesters (28 weeks) from the four classes that participated in the study. As per the design-based methodology, the study was conducted in phases that involved design, implementation and evaluation of the assessment developed within the student-faculty partnership. The impact of this activity was measured by the summative scores students obtained for the tasks. Other qualitative sources of data were focus-group interviews, open-ended questionnaires and face-to-face interviews with open-ended questions.

Date Set 2

Case Study 2 – Designing Classroom Instruction in Partnership

In this study, a total of 66 students enrolled in four different courses for a naster's degree program; three faculty members at the Faculty of Education at a public university in the north of Malaysia collaborated as partners. The key idea was to have the students design the classroom instructions in collaboration with their faculty to teach their peers. The collaboration was an integral part of the course: approximately 70% of each class session was taught by the students. The outstanding

feature of this exercise was that the students worked closely with the lecturer to design instruction that was meaningful, innovative and inclusive in nature. The teaching sessions were the culmination of several meetings, critical dialogue and guidance sessions with the lecturers whereby the students incorporated insights from the lecturer, teaching resources and peers. The two research questions that guided this study were: what were the students' perceptions of the benefits of partnering with their faculty in co-creating and delivering the classroom instruction; and which strategies did students use to negotiate their new role to forge a partnership with their faculty?

A qualitative research methodology was employed to collect data. The students and the instructors forged a partnership to develop classroom instructions for one term. The partnership component was embedded in the overall course design. The study lasted one full semester (14 weeks), during which the collaboration was conducted in systematically designed stages. The data sources included reflective journals from the students based on Gibbs's (1988) guidelines and follow-up interviews with the students.

Ethical issues

Ethical concerns regarding permission to use data and participants' consent when carrying out secondary data analysis are important to consider (Thome 1998). In the current study, the secondary data sets belonged to the first author of the paper, who ensured that the rreuse of the data did not violate any agreements regarding confidentiality and fidelity.

Secondary data: method and analysis

The current study uses qualitative methods to answer the research question. The three constructs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, as set out by SDT, served as the framework that guided our analysis. A total of 175 data sets (data sets 1-114 + data sets 2-61) were used. The data sets from the two studies were manually analysed by the two researchers and two trained research assistants. A list of behaviours that can support the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs was generated to code the data. The researchers and the research assistants worked in a team of two to open-code the data for students' experiences of satisfaction of the psychological needs. Those open codes were recorded in an electronic worksheet under three pre-determined categories and students' identifications. Later, the two researchers discussed codes, solved discrepancies and assigned those codes under the three subcategories (autonomy, competence and relatedness) through consensus.

Findings

This section presents the findings of the secondary data analysis and reports the information that indicates the quality of each theme or subtheme, data for each category that explains the quality of the finding and the analysis of that data.

Table 1. Themes and descriptions

Category	Theme	Descriptions
Autonomy		
	Agency	Opportunity to shape our learning, contribute, ideas, equal opportunity, equal chances, opportunity to participate, less struggle to give our view, our voices, perspective self-directed, increased ownership, feeling of being heard.
	Choice	Freedom to express our ideas, the opportunity to decide for ourselves, a chance to choose to perform, contribute, interests, preferences.
Competence		
	Confidence	Gained confidence, accurate judgements, generate ideas, arguments, enthusiasm, taking initiative, self-beliefs, self-regulation.
	Challenging	Stimulating, thought-provoking, cognitive potential, deep thinking, cognitive effort, high standards, reflection, critical thinking, skills, opportunity to contribute and master.
Relatedness		
	Environment	Comfortable, safe, warm, friendly, cohesion, collaborative connectedness, not isolated, power-sharing, risk sharing, share power, share risks, the absence of anxiety, stress, hesitation.
	Interaction	Meaningful, emotional, frequently, clarity, two-way, interactive, friendly, informal, very often, intellectual.

Autonomy – agency

The most common theme throughout the data was agency, categorised under the need for autonomy. More than 76% (135) students reported experiencing agency in terms of the opportunity to contribute, to voice their opinion, to have equal opportunity to participate and to have experiences of ownership. For example, S44 reported, "We were invited to contribute and shape our own learning experiences. It was almost like creating your own stage to perform" (Data Set 2). Similarly, S12 highlighted the ease of opportunity offered during SaP collaborations: "There was a limited struggle to be heard, I think everyone got equal opportunity to have their say" (Data Set 2). S64 explained how the sense of ownership was developed through the process: "…we knew it was coming from our side and we were in it as much as our lecturer. That instilled

accountability for our decisions as well as ownership of our learning" (Data Set 1). The students' experiences of the ability to contribute actively enhanced their agency beliefs and accountability for learning.

Autonomy – choice

The second subtheme under the need for autonomy was the provision of choice. More than 65% of students (115) reported relating to the provision of choice during partnership experiences. Students' emphasis on expressions like freedom, opportunity and options indicated that they experienced choice and volition while working through those collaborations. For example, S11 reported that "…it was welcoming and we felt that we had the freedom to decide what was good or suitable for us" (Data Set 1). S28 highlighted the provision of space and opportunity provided to the students to express their opinions: "Whenever there was a discussion we are given chances to express ourselves and most of all we could decide for ourselves…" (Data Set 2). Similarly, S5 shared about the availability of options to choose: "The knowledge that our preferences and interests matter in choosing several options while we design our instruction was very motivating" (Data Set 2).

The data indicates that students' experiences of partnership with their faculty gave them the freedom and opportunity to make choices and design their own learning. When their voices were heard and incorporated in teaching and learning, students felt they had control of their learning and that they were the initiators of their learning.

Competence – confidence

The most prominent theme under the category of competency need satisfaction was students' reports of their enhanced confidence while partnering with their faculty. Almost 45% (75) students reported feeling confident about the content knowledge as well as their soft skills. For instance, S34 stated that "…collaboration with our lecturer strengthened my confidence, I was more sure of my thinking and ideas to go forward during the discussion" (Data Set 2). Similarly, S16 said, "Although students may not be confident about the ability of students to make accurate judgements, I think during the process we made reasonably accurate judgements about each other's performance" (Data Set 1). S4 explained how the collaboration was able to nurture competency beliefs through close interactions: "I was always shy and anxious, fearing that I would make mistakes or say something wrong. Working closely with the lecturers has made me overcome that weakness" (Data Set 1).

Competence – challenge

Students also expressed that the process of the partnership was optimally challenging for them for its novel demands, and because it required significant effort and participation. Almost 30% of students (54) reported that the partnership experiences were challenging and stimulating. For example, S89 said, "The partnership required us to engage with the material deeply and independently and making conclusions out of it was a not only intellectually stimulating but very fulfilling experience too" (Data Set 1). S32 revealed the extent of cognitive effort required to be able to contribute meaningfully to those partnerships: "It [partnership] required skills to identify and understand the professional standards expected from us. We need to be critical and reflective, I think it an opportunity to maximise my cognitive potential" (Data Set 2). All in all, the partnership experiences provided a platform for students to engage meaningfully in challenging tasks, and the collaborative and interactive platform functioned as a tool to enhance their confidence.

Relatedness – non-controlling environment

Students' reports of their experiences of the satisfaction of relatedness needs through partnership were noticeable throughout the data. Around 74% (130) of students reported that the classroom environment was warm, friendly and non-threatening. For example, S54 stated, "I think our classroom environment became more comfortable and safe. The rapport between us was friendly and warm" (Data Set 2). Students in learning environments often worry about committing mistakes; however, S12 revealed that SaP collaboration mitigated those challenges: "We felt connected, not isolated throughout the process I think because we all shared power and shared risks" (Data Set 1). Students also shared their experiences of warm and safe learning environments created during the partnerships: "The kind of activities we undertook was able to reduce anxiety about the course material as well I was never stressed out before the session" (S43, Data Set 2).

Relatedness – meaningful interaction

Under the category of relatedness need satisfaction, almost half of the students (83) highlighted the importance of meaningful interactions they had had with their faculty during the partnership. They noted that the quality and frequency of the interaction mattered the most. For instance, S24 said, "…unless you have a research project with the faculty, it's often difficult to see them closely; I think this (partnership) gave us enough time together to sit and discuss" (Data Set 2). Similarly, S87 said, "if not at the same platform, I think we were close enough to discuss things without hesitation and more specifically as often as we thought was important" (Data Set 1). Students valued the nature of interaction with faculty that was safe, welcoming and non-threatening. For example, S93 said, "I remember, most of our meetings were two ways, we had enough time to present our ideas and most importantly brainstorm in informal settings. There was minimal fear of being judged" (Data Set 2). These responses emphasised that the informal and dialogic nature of the interactions allowed students to express themselves freely without any hesitation was important in feeling connected.

Discussion

The study aimed to explore how students' experiences of SaP collaborations lead to the fulfilment of SDT's three basic psychological needs. Qualitative data of students' experiences of partnerships with their faculties in two separates case studies were used to investigate how SaP pedagogy supports the satisfaction of these psychological needs. The findings demonstrate that SaP practices provide students with an appropriate motivational foundation through social contextual factors (the classroom climate) that nurture and support the growth of the three basic psychological needs.

According to the findings, students' reports of the satisfaction of autonomy needs during the partnership were embedded in the experiences of agency and choice. SDT regards the provision of choice as fundamental for students to experience autonomous motivation. Allowing students to choose or decide for themselves provides them with a sense of self-control and a feeling that they own the action, which in turn promotes their motivation and determination to engage in a task (Flowerday & Schraw 2000). Similarly, the concept of agency is highly valued in SDT, especially in the autonomy-supportive behaviors of those who are in a position of power, such as teachers, coaches and managers (Reeve 2012). Autonomy-supportive styles enable students to act in line with their preferences and interests, provide psychological freedom and empower students to endorse their voices and seek clarifications (Reeve & Tseng 2011). In SaP pedagogy, choice and agency are fundamental, as they provide students with a platform from which contribute ideas and

perspectives and participate in decision-making (Cook-Sather et al. 2014). The salient principles of the pedagogy call people in power positions to relinquish authority and empower students as partners (Deeley & Bovill 2015). For example, in the first study students' collaboration was sought not only for the development of rubrics, which traditionally is under the lecturer's jurisdiction, but also to make judgements about their peers' performance. Thus, inviting students' participation in decision-making for the issues that are relevant to their learning effectively promotes their personal control, self-determination and motivation.

In the second category, students' reports of gaining confidence and experiencing challenges during the partnerships indicated the satisfaction of their competence need. Given the fact that individuals have innate yearnings to feel effective in interacting with the environment, students' confidence and self-belief in accomplishing a task successfully is a crucial element in determining successful behaviours (Deci & Ryan 2000). SDT advocates creating conditions for competency need satisfaction, such as the provision of appropriate feedback and a non-threatening learning environment, to promote students' competency beliefs (Reeve 2006). Similarly, SDT greatly emphasises the relevance of creating optimal challenges for students as they undertake tasks and expand their academic capabilities (Niemiec & Ryan 2009). Optimally challenging tasks provide stimulus for individuals to exert high-quality cognitive efforts and master their situations. The practices and principles of SaP provide opportunities for students to participate and engage critically in intellectual dialogue with their faculty to analyse the complexities of teaching and learning; this, in turn, helps them develop confidence to engage in conversations and nurtures their feelings of agency as they direct their own learning (Cook-Sather & Luz 2014). With regard to challenges and stimulation for learning, not only do students absorb themselves deeply in the content to be co-designed, but their newly assigned role as partners proves transformational for them in terms of their identity. For example, in Data Set 2, a student reported the need to acquire appropriate skills and knowledge to meet the professional standards expected from them; this was indicative of their desire to excel and master the environment.

In the third category, students' reports of the satisfaction of their relatedness needs were based on their experiences of the non-threatening classroom environment and meaningful interactions with their faculty. In SDT, the provision of warm, friendly and considerate classroom environment that encourages open interaction between the teacher and the students is believed to enhance belongingness among students (Ryan & Patrick 2001). Similarly, student-teacher interactions that are thoughtful, frequent and meaningful have the potential to affect students' feelings of connectedness with their teachers; these feelings, in turn, determine the degree of their academic effort (Reeve 2006). Interestingly, SaP principles are specifically embedded in dialogic relationships built upon reciprocity, mutual trust and respect between faculties and students (Cook-Sather et al. 2014). Several studies have reported that SaP calls for an open exchange of ideas and collaboration and trust-building between students and faculty members, which enhances feelings of connectedness and community (e.g., Deeley & Bovill 2015). For example, in Data Set 1, while designing the classroom in collaboration, students had the opportunity to interact with their lecturer in informal settings, which steadily eased their anxiety and hesitation in communicating with the lecturer and helped them forge a quality relationship. Student-faculty contact quantity and quality are also proposed as a central characteristic of high-impact educational practices (Kuh 2009) for enhanced student engagement. Altogether, the findings of the secondary data analysis of the two SaP case studies demonstrate that the social contextual factors posited by SDT for students' need satisfaction correspond closely with the principles and practices of SaP.

Implications

SDT advocates that students' engagement is determined by the classroom environment and the conditions that support or thwart satisfaction of SDT's three basic psychological needs (Reeve 2006). The provision of conditions that can nurture those needs can effectively motivate students to engage deeply in the activities. In line with this proposition and the findings of the current study, it is understood that SaP collaborations provide sufficient conditions for the satisfaction of SDT's three basic psychological needs. These findings have implications for practitioners who consider that SaP practices are embedded in the motivational principles of SDT that advocate fulfilment of the three basic psychological needs as essential nutrients for students' intrinsic motivation.

In higher education, while other engagement strategies are empirically tested and proposed, SaP is a way ahead that can be adopted not only at the classroom or department level but as an institutional approach in which all the stakeholders can participate together to enhance students' learning experiences and engagement. With regard to designing instruction, lecturers can mindfully design spaces for students' voices and participation to create a classroom climate that is positive, welcoming and motivating for students to sustain engagement. These spaces can be created through teaching, learning and assessment practices, curriculum development and subject-based research or scholarship of teaching and learning (Bovill et al. 2011; Healey et al. 2014). For example, in the case studies examined in this study, students partnered for assessment and instructional design. Collaborations at the classroom level can be planned ahead to be incorporated in the semester plan. While acknowledging the diversity of higher-education institutes, Healey and Healey (2018) highlight the context-dependent nature of SaP collaboration, suggesting that the characteristics of such collaborations, such as how many students will be involved at what level and the collaborations' scale and time frame, can be determined in the context of national and institutional contexts.

It is hoped that an understanding that partnership processes are capable of generating experiences that are fundamental to students' inherent needs for growth, vitality, effort and sense of purpose will reduce resistance to these processes (Cook-Sather et al. 2014). More specifically, the two case studies examined in the present study, despite being rooted in the eastern context, which is known for large power distances (Hofstede et al. 2010), demonstrated the potential for pedagogical partnership and successful outcomes (Kaur et al. 2015). The concept was new and radical for both students and faculty members. However, by having close interactions and frequent and informal discussions, both sides forged new identities for themselves as learners. Students reported making academic gains as well as developing soft skills (Kaur et al. 2017; Kaur et al. 2019). We hope that practitioners in non-western contexts would incorporate similar approaches in engaging students in higher education.

The evidence-based explanation of the motivational processes underlying student-faculty partnerships also promises sustained engagement of students. When students join partnership initiatives offered at the faculty, it is likely that during the process they will experience need satisfaction and, consequently, they will be motivated and energised for quality engagement both in class and outside the classroom. This affirms this article's proposition that student engagement is the outcome of the motivation they experience during SaP practices. Since SaP is becoming a popular practice across various levels of higher education, more theoretical and empirical studies are needed to support practitioners' assertions that the study of SaP is not only a philosophical and sociological inquiry but a scientific inquiry as well.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that SaP principles and practices have the potential to fulfil SDT's three basic psychological for students' motivation; this explains the underlying mechanism that links SaP and engagement. In other words, during partnerships students can sense that they have options in shaping their learning in several ways; they also realise that are they capable of contributing in a meaningful way and their perspectives and that their presence in teaching and learning process is valued. Students and faculty in this process can form connections, which in turn, improves their motivation and persistence in given tasks.

The relevance of need fulfilment in education and other domains strongly emphasises creating environments that facilitate the satisfaction of students' need for autonomy, competence and relatedness to ensure their motivation; this, in turn, leads to engagement, persistence, effort and positive outcomes across several domains (Campbell et al. 2016; Deci et al. 2001; Goldman et al. 2016; Janke et al. 2015). The same exposition explains the framing of SaP as a process for student engagement (Healey et al. 2014) because when students experience their unique role as active participants who co-create their own learning, contrary to their traditional role of passive consumers, they feel completely immersed in the process.

References

Astin, AW 1993, *What Matters in College? Four Critical Years Revisited*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Barnes, E, Goldring, L Bestwick, A & Wood, J 2010, 'A collaborative evaluation of student–staff partnership in inquiry-based educational development', in S Little (ed.), *Staff-student partnerships in Higher Education*, Continuum, London, pp. 16-30.

Bovill, C, Cook-Sather, A & Felten, P 2011, 'Students as co-creators of teaching approaches, course design, and curricula: implications for academic developers', *International Journal for Academic Development*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp.133-145.

Campbell, R, Vansteenkiste, M, Delesie, L, Soenens, B ,Tobback, E, Vogelaers, D & Mariman, A 2016, 'The role of basic psychological need satisfaction, sleep, and mindfulness in the health-related quality of life of people living with HIV', *Journal of Health Psychology*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 535-545.

Chickering, AW & Gamson, ZF 1987, 'Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education', *AAHE Bulletin*, vol. 39, no. 7, pp. 3-7.

Cliffe, A, Cook-Sather, A, Healey, M, Healey, R, Marquis, E & Matthews, KE 2017, 'Launching a journal about and through students as partners', *International Journal for Students as Partners*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1-9.

Cook-Sather, A, & Felten, P 2017, 'Where Student Engagement Meets Faculty Development: How Student-Faculty Pedagogical Partnership Fosters a Sense of Belonging', *Student Engagement in Higher Education Journal*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 3-12.

Cook-Sather, A, Bovill, C & Felten, P 2014, *Engaging students as partners in learning and teaching: A guide for faculty*, John Wiley & Sons, San Francisco.

Cook-Sather, A & Luz, A 2014, 'Greater engagement in and responsibility for learning: What happens when students cross the threshold of student-faculty partnership', *Higher Education Research & Development*, vol. 34, no. 6, pp. 1097-1109.

Deci, EL & Ryan, RM 1985, *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*, Plenum Publishing, New York.

Deci, EL & Ryan, RM 2000, 'The" what" and" why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior', *Psychological Inquiry*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 227-268.

Deci, EL, Ryan, RM, Gagné, M, Leone, DR Usunov, J & Kornazheva, BP 2001, 'Need satisfaction, motivation, and well-being in the work organizations of a former eastern bloc country: A cross-cultural study of self-determination', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, vol. 27, no.8, pp. 930-942.

Deeley, SJ & Bovill, C 2015, 'Staff-student partnership in assessment: enhancing assessment literacy through democratic practices', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education,* vol. 42, no, 3. pp. 463-477.

Flowerday,T & Schraw, G 2000, 'Teacher beliefs about instructional choice: A phenomenological study', *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 92, no. 4, pp. 634-645.

Gibbs, G 1988, *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods*, Further Education Unit, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford.

Goldman, ZW, Goodboy, AK & Weber, K 2016, 'College Students' Psychological Needs and Intrinsic Motivation to Learn: An Examination of Self-Determination Theory', *Communication Quarterly*, vol. 65, no. 2, pp.167-191.

Hằng, B, Kaur, A & Patil, A 2015, 'Impacts of school administration autonomy support on students` learning motivation and intentions to drop out of vocational school', *International Journal of Quality Assurance in Engineering and Technology Education*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp.1-12.

Healey, M, & Healey, RL 2018, 'It depends: Exploring the context-dependent nature of students as partners' practices and policies', *International Journal for Students as Partners*, vol. 2, no.1, pp.1-10.

Healey, M, Flint, A & Harrington, K 2014, *Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education* Higher Education Academy, York.

Hofstede, G, Hofstede, GJ, & Minkov, M. 2010, *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*, McGraw-Hill, New York.

Janke, S, Nitsche, S & Dickhäuser, O 2015, 'The role of perceived need satisfaction at work for teachers' work-related learning goal orientation', *Teaching and Teacher Education,* vol. 47, no. 1, pp.184-194.

Kaur, A, Awang-Hashim, R & Kaur, M 2019, 'Students' Experiences of Co-creating Classroom Instruction with Faculty – A Case Study in Eastern Context', *Teaching in Higher Education*, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 461-477.

Kaur, A, Noman, M & Nordin, H, 2017, 'Inclusive assessment for linguistically diverse learners in higher education', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, vol. 42, no. 5, pp. 756-771.

Kaur, A, Awang Hashim, R, & Noman, M 2015, 'Teacher autonomy support intervention as a classroom practice in a Thai school-A self-determination theory perspective', *Journal for Multicultural Education,* vol. 9, no.1, pp.10-27.

Kaur, A, Awang Hashim, R, & Noman, M 2014, 'Teacher Autonomy Support: Does It Hinder Motivation Among Thai Students?', *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, vol.11, no.1, pp. 171-189.

Kuh, GD 2009. 'The national survey of student engagement: Conceptual and empirical foundations', *New Directions for Institutional Research,* vol. 141, no. 1, pp. 5-20.

Kuh, GD, Kinzie, J, Schuh, JH & Whitt, EJ 2005, 'Never Let It Rest: Lessons about Student Success from High-Performing Colleges and Universities Change', *The Magazine of Higher Learning*, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 44-51.

Kumar, V, & Kaur, A 2019, 'Supervisory Practices for Intrinsic Motivation of Doctoral Students: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective', *International Journal of Doctoral Studies,* vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 581-595.

Long-Sutehall, T, Sque, M & Addington-Hall, J 2010, 'Secondary analysis of qualitative data: a valuable method for exploring sensitive issues with an elusive population?', *Journal of Research in Nursing*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 335-344.

Longo, Y, Gunz, A, Curtis, G J, & Farsides, T 2016, 'Measuring need satisfaction and frustration in educational and work contexts: The Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale (NSFS)', *Journal of Happiness Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 295-317.

Lubicz-Nawrocka, TM 2018, 'From partnership to self-authorship: the benefits of co-creation of the curriculum', *International Journal for Students as Partners*, vol. 2, no.1, pp. 47-63.

Matthews, KE, Mercer-Mapstone, L, Dvorakova, SL, Acai, A, Cook-Sather, A & Felten, P 2019, 'Enhancing outcomes and reducing inhibitors to the engagement of students and staff in learning and teaching partnerships: implications for academic development', *International Journal for Academic Development*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 246-259.

Mercer-Mapstone, L, Dvorakova, SL, Matthews, K, Abbot, S, Cheng, B, Felten, P, Knorr, K, Marquis, E, Shammas, R & Swaim, K 2017, 'A systematic literature review of students as partners in higher education', *International Journal of Students as Partners*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1-23.

Miserandino, M 1996, 'Children who do well in school: Individual differences in perceived competence and autonomy in above-average children', *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 88, no. 2, pp. 203-214.

Niemiec, CP & Ryan, RM 2009, 'Autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom: Applying self-determination theory to educational practice', *School Field*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 133-144.

Pascarella, ET & Terenzini, PT 2005, *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research* (Vol. 2), Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Ratelle, CF & Duchesne, S 2014, 'Trajectories of psychological need satisfaction from early to late adolescence as a predictor of adjustment in school', *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, vol. 39, no. 4, pp. 388-400.

Reeve, J 2006, 'Teachers as facilitators: What autonomy-supportive teachers do and why their students benefit', *The Elementary School Journal*, vol. 106, no. 3, pp. 225-236.

Reeve, J 2012, 'A self-determination theory perspective on student engagement', in ALRSL Christenson & C Wylie (eds), *Handbook of research on student engagement*,Springer, New York, pp. 149-172.

Reeve, J & Tseng, CM 2011, 'Agency as a fourth aspect of students' engagement during learning activities', *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, vol. 36, no. 4, pp. 257-267.

Ryan, AM, & Patrick, H 2001,'The classroom social environment and changes in adolescents' motivation and engagement during middle school', *American Educational Research Journal*, vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 437-460.

Ryan, RM & Deci, EL 2000, 'Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being', *American Psychologist*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 68-78.

Saeed, S & Zyngier, D 2012, 'How motivation ınfluences student engagement: A qualitative case study', *Journal of Education and Learning*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 252-267.

Sansone, C & Harackiewicz, JM 2000, *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: The search for optimal motivation and performance*, Academic Press, San Diego.

Slemp, GR & Vella-Brodrick, DA 2014, 'Optimising employee mental health: The relationship between intrinsic need satisfaction, job crafting, and employee well-being', *Journal of Happiness Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 957-977.

Thome, S 1998.'Ethical and representational issues in qualitative secondary analysis', *Qualitative Health Research*, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 547-555.

Van den Akker, J, Gravemeijer, K, McKenney, S & Nieveen, N 2006, *Educational Design Research*, Routledge, London.

Wang, F & Hannafin, MJ 2005, 'Design-based research and technology-enhanced learning environments', *Educational Technology Research and Development,* vol. 53, no. 4, pp. 5-23.

Yu, K & Martin, AJ 2014, 'Personal best (PB) and "classic" achievement goals in the Chinese context: Their role in predicting academic motivation, engagement and buoyancy', *Educational Psychology,* vol. 34, no. 5, pp. 635-658.

Zhen, R, Liu, RD, Ding, Y, Wang, J, Liu, Y & Xu, L 2017, 'The mediating roles of academic self-efficacy and academic emotions in the relation between basic psychological needs satisfaction and learning engagement among Chinese adolescent students', *Learning and Individual Differences,* vol. 54, no. 1, pp. 210-216.