

## INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF GRADE 12 RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

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### ABSTRACT

*The study aimed to describe the senior high school student officers' level of involvement in their respective organizations and further investigate its existing relationship with their communicative competence by employing a descriptive correlational design. Using frequency count, percentage, mean, and Pearson r for statistical analysis of data, results revealed that most of the student leaders were actively involved with one recognized student organizations, devoted more than an hour in a week in their respective organizational activities regardless of its nature and occupied higher positions in the organization. Student leaders have communicative competence terms of verbal skills, non-verbal skills, organization, and subject knowledge and an existing significant relationship between their position in the organization and their communicative competence were found. In conclusion, student leaders who actively participate and occupy higher positions with different recognized student organization have bigger opportunity to attain communicative competence as they are exposed to different tasks and assignments that requires reading, writing, speaking, and understanding of the subject matter. Hence, it is recommended that parents, administrators, faculty members, organization moderators, and other stakeholders to support the active participation of learners in different student organization and design organizational activities that focus on the development of communication skills and competence. Moreover, future research employing a qualitative study design focusing on involvement and communicative competence may also be considered.*

*Keywords: Student Involvement, Communicative Competence, Recognized Student Organization*

### INTRODUCTION

Co-curricular involvement is considered as “the other form of education”. It is embedded on educational institutions' curriculum as it provides avenue for students to use the acquired knowledge inside the classroom in a real setting. It equips students with skills used in practical realities of life and further learning endeavors.

These supplemental skills contributed by co-curricular involvement found in student organizations' participation can be a significant factor to the student's school experiences and

development of communicative skills. Student organizations fall into the following categories: governing bodies, student government groups, academic and non-academic, honor societies, publication and media groups, service groups, sports groups, religious organizations, and special interest/cultural groups (Montelongo 2002, as cited in Ebede, 2015).

Astin defined involvement as “an investment of physical and psychological energy that occurs along a continuum and has both quantitative such as time spent and qualitative like amount of focus



or depth features. He further mentioned that “one who devotes considerable energy to study, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students” can be considered as an involved student. Studies in co-curricular involvement emphasized the importance of supplementing academic learning with learning that occurs outside the formal classroom environment. The interesting area to explore about co-curricular involvement is its relationship with the communicative competence development of student respondents (as cited by Moore, 2012).

Hymes originally conceptualized communicative competence as “knowing what to say to whom in what circumstances and how to say it.” It is an ability to understand and use language effectively to communicate in authentic social and school environments. Aside from the traditional language macro skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, it is also focused with sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Communicative competence through situations, using authentic communicative tasks, and considering all aspects of communicative behaviors, verbal and non-verbal (Canale & Swain 1980, cited in Lasala, 2013). Since student organization involvement provides authentic communicative experiences for students, it is interesting to determine the relationship between the said involvement and their communicative competence.

According to Wang and Shiveley (2009), co-curricular participation is assumed to influence students positively. It helps in the holistic formation of the students. In 2017, the Senior High School Department of Colegio de San Juan de Letran Calamba started to embed recognized student organization involvement to the curriculum. SHS students of the CSJLC started to join various student organizations of their interests. These RSOs are structured to provide authentic communicative experiences for students. Based on the data analysis on Academic Performance of Senior High School Students for AY 2016 – 2017, curricular activities helped to incorporate knowledge and skills to students outside the usual classroom routine. This study aimed to cross the gap of RSO involvement and its impact to the

development of the students’ communicative competence.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to 1) describe the level of involvement of the respondents in recognized student organization in terms of nature of recognized student organization involved with, number of recognized student organization participated, number of hours devoted in the organization’s activities in a week, position in the organization. More so, it also sought to 2) identify the respondents’ level of communicative competence; 3) identify and describe the relationship between recognized student organization involvement and communicative competence of the respondents.

## METHODOLOGY

The study primarily aimed to describe the level of the respondents’ involvement in recognized student organization and further investigate its existing relationship with the respondents’ communicative competence, thus it employed a descriptive correlational design. Descriptive research design was used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena and describe what exists with respect to the variables and conditions, (McCombes, 2019).

Respondents of the study were Grade 12 students who are officers of recognized student organization (RSO) of the selected educational institution in Calamba, Laguna. They were chosen as respondents since they were involved in recognized student organizations for two years. The sample size was determined using non-probability sampling, purposive sampling. As stated by Crossman (2018), a purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on the characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Based on list obtained by the researchers from the Office of Students Affairs Department, there were six (6) recognized student organizations and 44 RSO officers for AY 2019-2020.

The survey questionnaire was used to describe the profile and level of respondents’ involvement in

recognized student organization. The survey questionnaire contains questions about the nature of recognized student organization being involved, number of student organization participated, number of days devoted in the organization's activities in a week and position in the organization of the respondents while a researcher-made English test was administered to determine the level of the respondents' communicative competence particularly (a) Linguistic Competence and (b) Discourse Competence. The instrument was subjected to content validation by subject specialists and some revisions were made before its finalization. It was validated by three subject specialists and adapted from two related studies. The respondents were gathered and asked to stay in a room. Each participant is called for the English Test. They were assessed by three evaluators in both linguistic and discourse areas. Correlated to this, statistical treatment of data was used in computing, analyzing, and interpreting the gathered data. Frequency count and percentage were utilized in describing the profile and involvement of the respondents in terms of (a) nature of recognized student organization they are involved, (b) number of student organizations they have participated, (c) number of days in a week they have devoted in organizational activities and position in the organization they occupied. Mean was used to determine the respondents' level of communicative competence (linguistic and discourse competence). While Pearson  $r$  (test of relationship) was utilized to test the relationship between the respondents' level of involvement in recognized student organization and communicative competence.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Respondents' Profile

Most of the respondents were involved with academic organizations compared to non-academic organizations. Based on the collected data 61% ( $n=27$ ) of the respondents were involved with academic organization while the remaining 39% ( $n=17$ ) were involved with non-academic organization. Majority of the respondents were actively involved with one (1) recognized student

organizations with 80% ( $n=35$ ) of the population while the remaining 20% ( $n=9$ ) were actively involved with two (2) organizations.

The number of hours devoted by the respondents to their respective RSO activities in a week is also determined. 18.2% ( $n=8$ ) of the respondents devoted one (1) hour to their RSO activities in a week, 43.2% ( $n=19$ ) of the respondents devoted two (2) hours to their RSO activities in a week, 2.3% ( $n=1$ ) of the respondents devoted four (4) hours to their RSO activities in a week, 11.4% ( $n=5$ ) of the respondents devoted five (5) hours to their RSO activities in a week, 9.1% ( $n=4$ ) of the respondents devoted six (6) hours to their RSO activities in a week, 13.6% ( $n=6$ ) of the respondents devoted eight (8) hours to their RSO activities in a week while the remaining 2.3% ( $n=1$ ) of the respondents devoted ten (10) hours to their organization's activities in a week. It implies that most of the respondents devoted more than an hour a week to their respective organizational activities regardless of its nature.

The positions held in the organization of the respondents were identified. 13.6% ( $n=6$ ) of the population are presidents, 11.4% ( $n=5$ ) are vice presidents, 13.6% ( $n=6$ ) are secretaries, 11.4% ( $n=5$ ) are treasurers, 9.1% ( $n=4$ ) are auditors, 11.4% ( $n=5$ ) are PIOs, 6.8% ( $n=3$ ) are peace officers, 11.4% ( $n=5$ ) are G12-representative, 2.3% ( $n=1$ ) is G12-STEM councilor, 2.3% ( $n=1$ ) is G12-ABM councilor, 2.3% ( $n=1$ ) is G12-HUMSS councilor, 2.3% ( $n=1$ ) is G12-GA councilor and the remaining, 2.3% ( $n=1$ ) is G12-Chairperson. Based on the collected data, majority of the respondents belong to the higher positions in the organization.

As cited by Foreman and Retallick in 2013, involvement is defined as an investment of physical and psychological energy that occurs along a continuum and has both quantitative (e.g., time spent) and qualitative (e.g., amount of focus or depth) features. He also mentioned that a student who devotes considerable energy to studying, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members and other students is an involved student. This idea is based on Astin's theory of involvement which is used as the theoretical basis of student involvement for



both inside and outside of the classroom as well as co-curricular activities.

In the same study, it was mentioned that an involvement score is represented by both quantitative and qualitative features. Qualitative features include number of organizations the students participated, meeting participation, and the number of hours they spent in participating in these organizations, while qualitative features include the positional leadership role experience of the student.

## 2. Level of Communicative Competence

Communicative competence enables users to identify the appropriate manner, usage, and setting of the language. Communicative competence consists of four areas and linguistic competence is one of it. Linguistic competence, in particular, is about language code and its command. It includes rules of syntax and morphology as well as phonology and spelling. Thus, the goal of the said competence is to gain knowledge and perform language coding, which is expected to be right and exact grammatically (Díaz-Rico & Weed, 2010, as cited in Tuan 2017). Moreover, it is significant in L2 production in terms of accuracy and fluency. As the learner of the language advances to proficiency level, the significance of acquiring competence increases.

### 2.1. Respondents' Linguistic Competence

**Table 1**  
*Results of Professional Correspondence Writing Test*

Professional Correspondence Writing Test	Frequency	Percent %
Superior	8	18.2
Very Good	26	59.1
Acceptable	10	22.7
Marginal	0	0.0
Poor	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.74</b>	

Table 1 shows the results obtained from the three (3) raters of the professional correspondence writing test. Based on the assessment, the linguistic competence of the respondents obtained 3.74 mean rating which is interpreted as "Very Good". 18.2% (n=8) of the respondents were assessed as "Superior", 59.1% (n=26) were "Very Good" while the remaining 22.7% (n=10) were assessed as "Marginal".

This finding elicits that the linguistic competence of the respondents is in "very good" level. The high level of competence obtained by the respondents in professional correspondence writing test implies that they were able to use the command of language coding such as its syntax and semantics appropriate to their level since the test assess their competence in terms of organization, coherence, focus & details, and sentence structure, grammar, mechanics, and spelling. They were able to apply the different sets of rules crucial in exhibiting linguistic competence.

Meanwhile, as a learner learns the grammatical rules of the language, one is expected to acquire the proper usage of it. This includes sociocultural constructs such as the setting (when and where), receiver, manner, and the topic to be talked about. The ability to create discourse should be developed alongside linguistic abilities. Isolation of the two abilities may inhibit communicative competence development. As stated by Widdowson (1983) in his study, to learn a language is not to acquire knowledge of rules alone but the ability to utilize it in communication. It is more than understanding, speaking, reading, or writing sentences. The most essential element is the ability to use these sentences to communicate (Ohno, 2011).

### 2.2. Respondents' Discourse Competence

Table 2 displays the results obtained from the three (3) raters of the speaking test. Based on the assessment, the discourse competence of the respondents obtained 4.06 mean rating which is interpreted as "Very Good," 40.9% (n=18) of the respondents were assessed as "Superior", 54.5% (n=24) were "Very Good" while the remaining 4.6% (n=2) were assessed as "Marginal". This finding





suggests that the discourse competence of the respondents is in “very good” level.

**Table 2**  
*Results of Speaking Test*

Speaking Test	Frequency	Percent %
Superior	18	40.9
Very Good	24	54.5
Acceptable	2	4.6
Marginal	0	0.0
Poor	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	44	100.0
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>4.06</b>	

The high level of competence obtained by the respondents suggests that they were able to create discourse while applying the rules of the language since the test assesses them in terms of verbal skills, non-verbal skills, organization, and subject knowledge.

As suggested by Widdowson, experiences inside and outside of the classroom must ensure the acquisition and proficiency in the two competencies by providing the learners opportunities to use both in context. Selecting the type of sentence appropriate to the context lies with linguistic context while recognizing and using communicative functions fulfilled by their sentences is discourse context. Language rules must be alongside semantic concepts and ensure that the learner applies it to practical and natural communicative functions (Ohno, 2011).

Zahedi (2012) mentioned that assessment of communicative competence among students is indispensable in school setting both academic and non-academic experiences since it facilitates their potential to use integrated skills. Integrated skills such as the four areas of communicative competence (including linguistic and discourse competence) develop the receptive and productive skills of the students. Reading and listening are receptive skills while speaking and writing are productive skills.

### 2.3 Respondents’ Level of Communicative Competence

Table 3 illustrates the mean results obtained from both professional correspondence writing and speaking tests. Based on the assessment, the level of respondents’ communicative competence is 3.90 mean rating which is interpreted as “Competent User of English”. 27.3% (n=12) of the respondents were assessed as “Very Competent User of English”, 65.9% (n=29) were “Competent User of English” while the remaining 6.8% (n=3) were assessed as “Fair User of English”. This finding infers that the respondents are competent users of English.

**Table 3**  
*Overall Respondents’ Level of Communicative Competence*

Communicative Competence	Frequency	Percent %
Very Competent User of English	12	27.3
Competent user of English	29	65.9
Fair User of English	3	6.8
Modest User of English	0	0.0
Limited User of English	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	44	100.0
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	3.90	

### 3. Significant Relationship between Student and Organization Involvement and Communicative Competence

#### 3.1. In terms of Nature of Organization

**Table 4**  
*Significant Relationship between Nature of Organization and Respondents’ Level of Communicative Competence*

Level of Communicative Competence	r	Nature of Organization	Verbal Interpretation
	-0.011		No significant correlation
	sig	0.945	
	N	44	

Table 4 flashes that there is no significant correlation between the nature of organization the



respondents are involved with and their communicative competence ( $r = -0.011$ ,  $sig = 0.945$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted in terms of RSOs' nature.

### 3.2. In terms of the Number of RSOs actively involved

Table 5 reveals that there is no significant correlation between the number of RSOs the respondents are involved with and their communicative competence ( $r = -0.056$ ,  $sig = 0.720$ ).

**Table 5**  
*Significant Relationship between Number of RSOs actively involved with and Respondents' Level of Communicative Competence*

		Number of RSOs actively involved with	Verbal Interpretation
Level of Communicative Competence	r	-0.056	No significant correlation
	sig	0.720	
	N	44	

Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted in terms of number of RSOs the respondents are actively involved with.

### 3.3. In terms of Number of hours devoted to organization's activities in a week

**Table 6**  
*Significant Relationship between Number of hours devoted to organization's activities in a week and Respondents' Level of Communicative Competence*

		Number of hours devoted to organization's activities in a week	Verbal Interpretation
Level of Communicative Competence	r	0.267	No significant correlation
	sig	0.080	
	N	44	

Table 6 highlights that there is no significant correlation between the number of hours devoted by the respondents in their organization's activities in a week and their communicative competence ( $r = 0.267$ ,  $sig = 0.080$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted in terms of a number of hours the respondents devoted to the organization's activities in a week.

### 3.4. In terms of Position in the organization

**Table 7**  
*Significant Relationship between Position in the organization and Respondents' Level of Communicative Competence*

	Position in the organization	Verbal Interpretation
Level of Communicative Competence	r	-0.396
	sig	0.008
	n	44

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 shows that there is a significant correlation between the respondents' position in the organization and their communicative competence ( $r = -0.396$ ,  $sig = 0.008$ ). This implies that the higher the respondents' position in the organization, the higher the communicative competence level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected in terms of respondents' position in the organization.

This substantiates with the study conducted by Foreman and Retallick (2013) wherein learning experiences, skills, and personal development are expected to nurture while holding an office in an organization. It was mentioned by Astin in his study (cited in Foreman and Retallick 2013) that respondents who obtained higher scores in areas under self-consciousness, individual valuing, and commitment are the ones who held positional roles in organization together with those who spent more time in organizational activities. This goes with the research finding that leadership and soft skills development such as communication were increased when an individual served as a club officer (Ewing et al., 2009).

Thus, the null hypothesis, in general, is partially rejected since 25% of the variables to be correlated is found significant.

The study reveals that most of the respondents were involved in academic organizations, actively involved with one recognized student organizations, devoted more than an hour for a week in their respective organizational activities regardless of its nature and occupied higher positions in the organization.

Based on the assessment through a researcher-made English test, the respondents obtained a mean rating of 3.74 for their linguistic competence while 4.06 mean rating for their discourse competence which are both interpreted as very good. Overall, the respondents are found competent users of English in terms of communicative competence level with a mean rating of 3.90 interpreted as such.

Through a Pearson R correlation test, it was found that (a) there is no significant relationship between the nature of organization the respondents are involved with and their communicative competence, (b) there is no significant relationship between the number of RSOs the respondents are involved in and their communicative competence, (c) there is no significant relationship between the respondents' number of hours devoted to an organization's activities in a week and their communicative competence, (d) there is a significant relationship between the respondents' position in the organization and their communicative competence.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of the professional correspondence writing test, most of the respondents are in the scale of "Very Good" and it infers that the student leaders have a high competence in linguistics wherein they can write and understand the rules and vocabulary of the language. There is no scale of "marginal" and "poor" which indicates that student leaders possess linguistic competence. Also, majority garnered 54.5% with the scale of "Very Good", which specifies that student leaders can apply the rules of the language in terms of verbal skills, non-

verbal skills, organization, and subject knowledge. Given the information and data presented, the researchers find out that student leaders who actively participate with different recognized student organizations have a bigger opportunity to attain communicative competence. In addition, there is a significant level of communicative competence among student leaders who hold higher positions as they are the ones who are exposed with different tasks and assignments that require reading, writing, speaking, and understanding of the subject matter.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Students benefitted from participating in different recognized student organizations through their active involvement in organizational activities, thus learners should actively participate in different academic organizations in the institution as this can be a platform to develop their communication skills and competence. Parents and guardians should support and give consent to the learners to join and participate in different organizations as this may enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of their children. Faculty members must encourage the learners to join and acquire positions in the organization as this can be a means for the learners to strive and achieve in their endeavor. Student Affairs and Discipline Department should organize activities that will encourage the learners to join different organizations; the structure of different organizations must be directed to gain the interest of the learners while organizational moderators must support and guide the learners/officers of the RSO in establishing events, functions and programs that will enrich the capability and capacity of the learners in achieving communicative competence. Moreover, future studies including qualitative data on involvement and communicative competence may be considered.

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